JANUARY 2015 AUTOMOBILEMAG.COM

Automobile

FIRST DRIVE!

Z06

Forget Porsche, this 650-hp monster will scare Ferrari

2015 All-Stars

WE PICK 10 WINNERS FROM THE BEST NEW CARS IN AMERICA

+ DESIGN, MAN, AND TECH OF THE YEAR

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

Page 82

MERCEDES-AMG GT S vs. PORSCHE 911 GTS

Automobile
JANUARY 2015
2015 ALL-STARS, MERCEDES-AMG GT S VS. PORSCHE 911 GTS; CHEVROLET CORVETTE Z06; DODGE CHARGER SRT HELLCAT
VOL. 29, NO.10

inside

Automobile FEATURES

ON THE COVER

44

ALL-STARS 2015

By Automobile Staff
We pick the very best new cars from this year's bumper crop of contenders.

62

MAN OF THE YEAR: PETER MULLIN

By Ronald Ahrens
The visionary collector and philanthropist pushes to advance automotive design.

64

DESIGN OF THE YEAR: MERCEDES-BENZ S-CLASS COUPE

By Robert Cumberford
A distinguished distillation of all they know in Stuttgart.

68

TECHNOLOGY OF THE YEAR: BMW'S PROJECT i

By Todd Lassa and Georg Kacher
Transforming the future of the automobile through mass-market production of carbon fiber.

74

2015 CHEVROLET CORVETTE Z06

By Preston Lerner
It's not a race car. Actually, it's better.

82

MERCEDES-AMG GT S VS. PORSCHE 911 GTS

By Georg Kacher
Germany's newest sports car, the AMG GT S, meets its most iconic, the 911, on Alpine roads.

AUTOMOBILE (ISSN 0894-3583) January 2015, Vol. 29, No.10. Published monthly by Source Interlink Media, LLC., 261 Madison Ave., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016-2303. Copyright © 2014 by Source Interlink Magazines, LLC. All rights reserved. Periodicals Postage Paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. SUBSCRIPTIONS: U.S. and U.S. Possessions $19.94 for 12 issues. Canada $31.94 per year and international orders $43.94 per year (including surface mail postage). Payment in advance, U.S. funds only. POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS. (See DMM 707.4.12.5); NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: send address corrections to: AUTOMOBILE, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. For subscriptions, address changes, and adjustments, write to AUTOMOBILE Magazine, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, Florida 32142–0235, or email automobile@emailcustomerservice.com or call 800–289–2886 (U.S.), 386–447–6383 (international). Please include name, address, and telephone number on any inquiries. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. Manuscripts, photos, and other material submitted must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope; AUTOMOBILE Magazine assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. Printed in U.S.A.

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ANDREW TRAHAN**; AMG GT S, 911: **TOM SALT**

NISSAN

Innovation
that excites

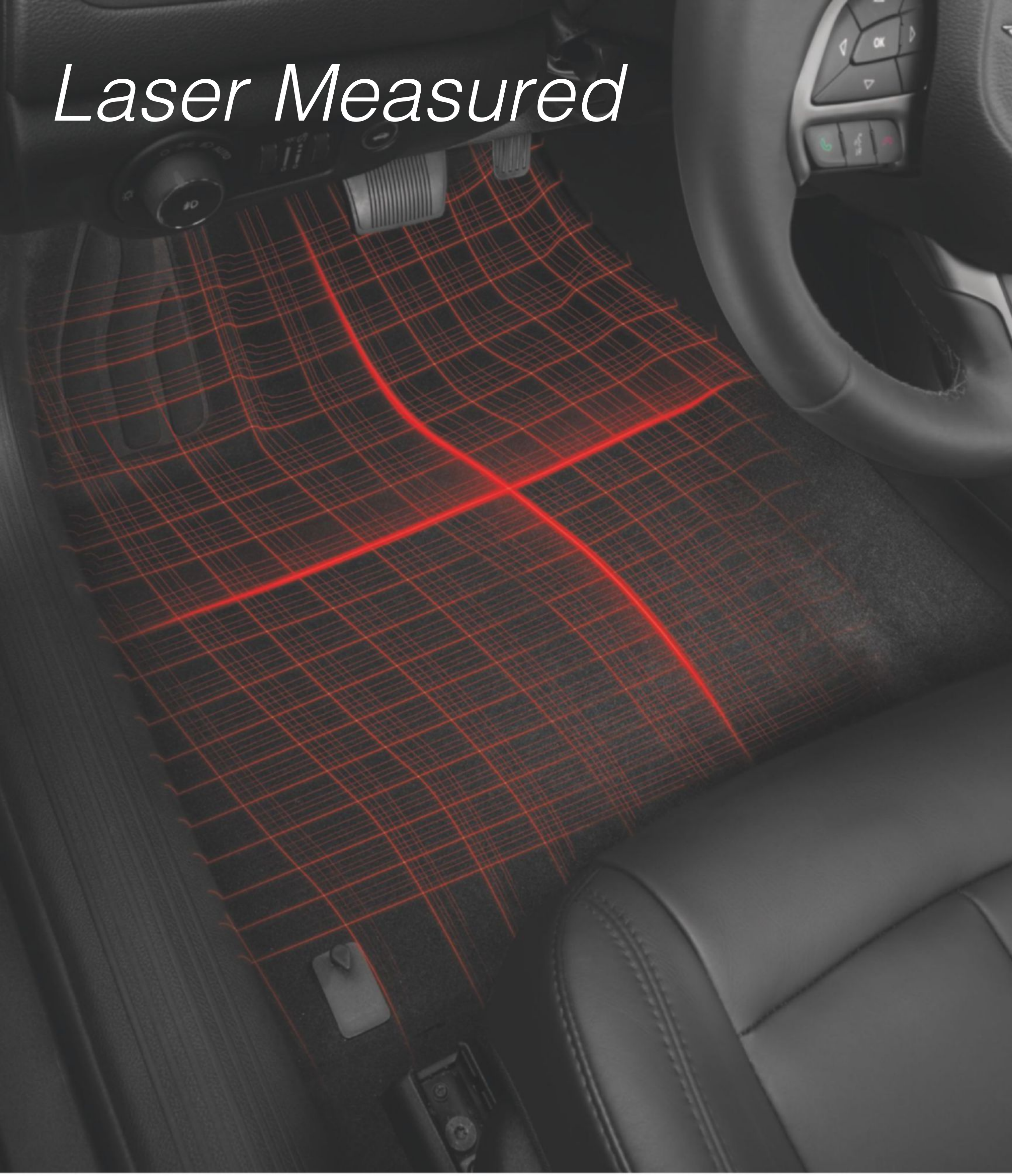
nismo

A DREAM FOR 60,000. A REALITY FOR 1.

Most car companies wouldn't look to video games for their next international motorsport star. Nissan isn't like other car companies. GT Academy takes the best Gran Turismo racers in America and puts them in real NISMO® 370Z's and GT-R's to compete for the job of a lifetime: to race professionally for Nissan. Tune in and watch as our twelve virtual racers come face-to-face with the harsh realities of racing, leaving only one to become this year's NISMO athlete and GT Academy champion.

Watch the race from virtual to reality at GTAcademyUSA.com

Always wear your seat belt, and please don't drink and drive. ©2014 Nissan North America, Inc.



Accessories Available for

Acura • Audi • BMW • Buick • Cadillac • Chevrolet • Chrysler • Daihatsu • Dodge • Ferrari • Ford • GMC • Honda • Hummer • Hyundai • Infiniti • Isuzu • Jeep • Kia • Land Rover • Lexus • Lincoln • Maserati • Mazda • Mercedes-Benz • Mercury • Mini • Mitsubishi • Nissan • Oldsmobile • Plymouth • Pontiac • Porsche • Saab • Saturn • Scion • Smart • Subaru • Suzuki • Toyota • Volkswagen • Volvo • and more!

Order Now: 800-441-6287

American Customers
WeatherTech.com

Canadian Customers
WeatherTech.ca

European Customers
WeatherTechEurope.com

©2015 by MacNeil IP LLC

Perfect-Fit

WeatherTech

WeatherTech®

American Manufacturing *Done Right!*

JANUARY 2015

inside

Automobile DEPARTMENTS

Ignition

14 **EDITOR'S LETTER**
By Mike Floyd
All-Stars are the only stars now.

16 **NEWS**
Cadillac's wicked ATS-V, a slimmer BMW 6 Series, and a tough start for the Tudor United SportsCar Championship.

26 **BY DESIGN**
By Robert Cumberford
Jaguar XE: a good design but no charisma.

28 **THE ASPHALT JUNGLE**
By Arthur St. Antoine
What lies beneath: unearthing the treasures in the basement of the Petersen Automotive Museum in L.A.

30 **NOISE, VIBRATION & HARSHNESS**
By Jamie Kitman
The bark of excellence: Johan de Nysschen is stirring things up at Cadillac.

32 **LETTERS**
A controversial redesign for the Mazda Miata. Ferraris in America.

Driven

34 **2015 DODGE CHARGER SRT HELLCAT**
The most powerful sedan in production unleashes the fury of 707 horsepower and a common refrain: "Hell yes!"

36 **2015 RENAULT TWINGO**
Ready for the next rear-engine revolution?

38 **2015 ROLLS-ROYCE GHOST SERIES II**
With a refresh of the 5-year-old luxe sedan, a sumptuous ride becomes more refined.

40 **2015 FORD F-150**
America's best-selling pickup lightens up, but will it please the work-gloved masses?

Upshift

90 **FOUR SEASONS LOGBOOK**
A Jeep Cherokee joins the fleet, and we update our Cadillac CTS Vsport, Infiniti Q50, and Mini Cooper.

96 **AUCTIONS**
A postwar Bentley coupe bodied by Figoni et Falaschi hits the RM Auction in London.

98 **COLLECTIBLE CLASSIC**
1965-67 Sunbeam Tiger: Carroll Shelby's affordable California hot rod.

102 **NON SEQUITUR**
The aftermath of a Hellcat burnout at this year's All-Stars competition.

ILLUSTRATION: **TIM MARRS**, HELLCAT: **ANDREW TRAHAN**

GET
YOUR
FIX

What's Your Passion?

Check Out the One-Stop Hub for Everything Enthusiast

TEN THE ENTHUSIAST NETWORK™

POWERED BY PASSIONS

Visit: tenappstore.com

Makes Glass Invisible!
Get Coupon and SAVE
/InvisibleGlass
Invisible Glass
Superior cleaning power for windows and mirrors
Leaves no streaks, smears or haze
VAM3B
Find America's #1 selling auto glass cleaner at
LOWE'S
meijer
AutoZone
PEP BOYS AUTO
TARGET
Walmart
O'Reilly AUTO PARTS
Advance Auto Parts
DOLLAR GENERAL
InvisibleGlass.com

Automobile

Editorial

Editor-In-Chief
MICHAEL FLOYD
Executive Editor
TODD LASSA
Creative Director
DARREN SCOTT
Senior Editors
JOSEPH A. LORIO, DAVID ZENLEA
Copy Chief
EMILIANA SANDOVAL
Managing Editor
RUSTY KURTZ

European Bureau Chief
GEORG KACHER
Automotive Design Editor
ROBERT CUMBERFORD
West Coast Editor
MICHAEL JORDAN
New York Bureau Chief
JAMIE KITMAN
Editor-At-Large
ARTHUR ST. ANTOINE
Road Test Editor
CHRISTOPHER NELSON
Videographer
SANDON VOELKER

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
RONALD AHRENS
JASON H. HARPER
DAVE KINNEY
PRESTON LERNER
BOB MERLIS
LAWRENCE ULRICH

MANUFACTURING & PRODUCTION OPERATIONS
VP, Manufacturing & Ad Operations
GREG PARNELL
Senior Director, Ad Operations
PAULINE ATWOOD
Archivist
THOMAS VOEHRINGER

EDITORIAL OFFICES
831 S. Douglas Street
El Segundo,
California 90245
310.531.9900

Senior Copy Editor
KATHLEEN CLONTS
Copy Editors
JESSE BISHOP
KARA SNOW
Managing Art Director
MIKE ROYER
Staff Photographer
PATRICK M. HOEY

AUTOMOBILEMAG.COM
Associate Web Editors
JOSEPH CAPPARELLA
JAKE HOLMES
ERIC WEINER

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS
TIM ANDREW
MARK BRAMLEY
DANIEL BYRNE
JIM FETS
MARTYN GODDARD
ROBERT KERIAN
CHARLIE MAGEE
TIM MARRS
A. J. MUELLER
TOM SALT
JÜRGEN SKARWAN
ANDREW TRAHAN
ANDREW YEADON

SUBSCRIBER CUSTOMER SERVICE
Phone: 800.289.2886
(Outside the U.S.,
386.447.6385)
E-mail: automobile@email
customerservice.com
Mail: Automobile Magazine,
P.O. Box 420235, Palm
Coast, Florida 32142–0235.
Please include name,
address, and phone
number on inquiries.

Please Recycle This Magazine
Remove Inserts or Samples Before Recycling

Postmaster:
Send address changes to
Automobile Magazine
P.O. Box 420235
Palm Coast, Florida
32142–0235

TIRERACK.com
OFFICIAL TIRE & WHEEL SUPPLIER OF
Automobile

Reprints
To purchase custom reprints
or e-prints of articles
appearing in this publication,
contact: Wright's Media
877.652.5295
(Outside the U.S.,
281.419.5725)

The Suits

GENERAL MANAGER, IN-MARKET NETWORK
ERIC SCHWAB

ADVERTISING SALES
WEST/ Los Angeles:
831 S. Douglas St.,
El Segundo, CA 90245;
Mark Dewey;
Bruce Kukuk; Alan Reed;
Chuck Miller; 310.531.9900

EAST/ New York:
261 Madison Ave., 6th floor,
New York, NY 10016;
Janet Catallo;
Jim Keplesky,
212.915.4000

NORTH / Detroit:
4327 Delemere Court,
Royal Oak, MI 48073;
Joe Didato; Mike DeTurris;
Matt Smith, 248.594.5999

MIDWEST/ Chicago:
Marc Gordon,
312.396.0620

SOUTHEAST/
Brit White,
813.675.3479

SOUTHWEST/
Glenda R. Elam,
626.695.5950

To advertise on this magazine's website, or any of Source Interlink Media's other enthusiast sites, please contact us at, IM-Advertising@sorc.com

ADVERTISING
Associate General Manager, In-Market Network
MARIA JAMISON
VP, Digital Media
JASON RICE
Marketing Director
SHAWN HIGGINS
Senior Finance Director
JENNY LEE
Advertising Coordinator
MELINDA VILLEGAS
Assistant to the General Manager
CHING CORNFORTH

SOURCE INTERLINK MEDIA

Chairman
PETER ENGLEHART
Chief Executive Officer
SCOTT P. DICKEY
EVP, Chief Financial Officer
BILL SUTMAN
EVP, Chief Creative Officer
ALAN ALPANIAN
EVP, Sports & Entertainment
NORB GARRETT
EVP, Chief Content Officer
ANGUS MACKENZIE
EVP, Operations
KEVIN MULLAN
SVP, Enterprises
TYLER SCHULZE
EVP, Sales & Marketing
ERIC SCHWAB
SVP, Digital Operations
DAN BEDNAR
VP, Sales Operations
MATT BOICE
SVP, Financial Planning
MIKE CUMMINGS
SVP, Automotive Digital
GEOFF DEFRANCE
VP, Editorial Operations
AMY DIAMOND
EVP, Aftermarket Automotive
DOUG EVANS
SVP, Content Strategy, Automotive
DAVID FREIBURGER
SVP, Digital, Sports & Entertainment
GREG MORROW
VP, Digital Monetization
ELISABETH MURRAY
SVP, Marketing
RYAN PAYNE
EVP, Mind Over Eye
BILL WADSWORTH

CONSUMER MARKETING, ENTHUSIAST MEDIA SUBSCRIPTION COMPANY, INC.
SVP, Circulation
TOM SLATER
VP, Retention & Operations Fulfillment
DONALD T. ROBINSON III

BREITLING 1884
THE OFFICIAL TIMEPIECE OF AUTOMOBILE MAGAZINE
Automobile

Alliance for Audited Media

Occasionally, our subscriber list is made available to reputable firms offering goods and services that we believe would be of interest to our readers. If you prefer to be excluded, please send your current address label and a note requesting to be excluded from these promotions to Source Interlink Media, LLC, 831 S. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245, Attn.: Privacy Coordinator. To order back issues, visit www.simbackissues.com. Printed in the USA. Copyright © 2014 by Source Interlink Magazines, LLC. All rights reserved. Canada Post: Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to IMEX Global Solutions, P.O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2.

DON'T IMAGINE,
JUST DRIVE ONE.

Our program is authentic and as real as it gets. We provide the expertise and assets needed to put you in a real Formula One® race car at select tracks in North America.

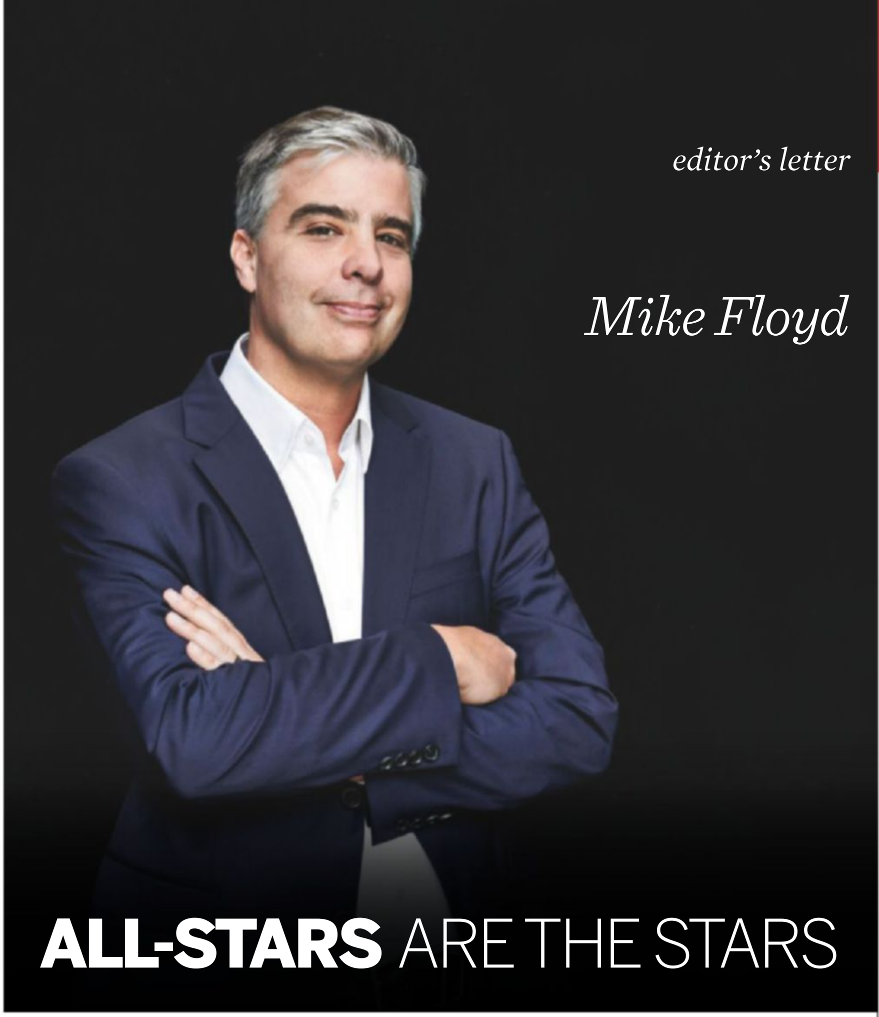
Seasoned and novice motorsport connoisseurs alike can experience the thrill and adrenaline that our one-of-a-kind program provides. Go ahead, be one of the very few to drive a real Formula One® race car!

GP Experience

1-844-DRIVEF1 | WWW.GPEXPERIENCE.US |

The F1 FORMULA 1 logo, F1 logo, F1 FIA FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP logo, FORMULA 1, FORMULA ONE, F1, FIA FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, GRAND PRIX, F1 GRAND PRIX, FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX and related marks are trademarks of Formula One Licensing BV, a Formula One group company. All rights reserved. The GP Experience is unofficial and is not associated in any way with the Formula One group of companies.

PIRELLI



Mike Floyd

ALL-STARS ARE THE STARS

ALL YEAR LONG, OUR datebooks fill up with an unceasing treadmill of auto shows, press drives, concours, interviews, daily news, weekend jaunts, photo/video shoots, and deadlines, always deadlines. Not that we're complaining, mind you. We love what we do. But there's one glorious week that stands out on the *Automobile* calendar. You're holding the result in your hands: The All-Stars Issue.

Automobile's eclectic band of editors spends four days with a dream team of cars, driving 'em hard and putting 'em away wet. It's our chance to cut through the noise and bring you what we believe are the top automotive offerings of the year. To salute and honor the cars that did not bore us. What David E. Davis Jr. wrote in his intro to the 1991 All-Stars still holds true today. "What we really seek is a category-crossing 'best,' a unique automotive experience that will appeal to enthusiasts like ourselves."

We return once again to South Haven, Michigan, just as the fall chill descends on the shores of mighty Lake Michigan. All-Stars HQ is the nearby GingerMan Raceway, a tidy 2.14-mile circuit boxed in by rolling meadows and farmland that serves as a perfect setting for intense driving—and intense debate.

The 25 vehicles invited to this year's event were hustled along miles of ragged and winding backcountry roads and pushed like rented mules around GingerMan's 11 turns. We wrangled over the nuances of steering feel, acceleration, braking, handling, interior ergonomics, and exterior design in the garage where we gathered to compare notes. On the last night, we assembled around a long table at a local cafe and argued, ate, drank, and argued some more before finally choosing the All-Stars.

What I love about All-Stars—in keeping with the spirit of *Automobile*'s founders—is that there are no exhaustive criteria to adhere to, no numbers to crunch. Just 19 auto journalists guided by their passion for all things cars and decades of combined experience evaluating vehicles.

We have made some changes this year. Most notable is the decision to retire Automobile of the Year. From now on, All-Stars will be our car-award calling card, the franchise we'll build upon. Beginning with this year's event, we're inviting only all-new, significantly revised, or otherwise unique variants to the All-Stars competition—no more reading about the same car eight years in a row. We'll take a critical look at each year's crop of new cars and whittle it down to a list of vehicles that have All-Star potential.

While most of the vehicles we brought along this year are the types of #noboringcars you'd expect to see, we also invited a few wild cards to keep things interesting. Most years, we'll pick 10 winners, but we reserve the right to choose as many as we want depending on the year and the number of eligible cars on the market.

After the dust settles, we'll take our All-Stars on new adventures, drive them harder, and keep them even longer in order to determine if they're really what we thought they were during the week in South Haven.

Enjoy this year's presentation, both here and at **automobilemag.com/extra**, where we'll have a bootload more great photos and behind-the-scenes All-Stars action. Here's hoping you'll dig the cars we've selected, though I imagine feelings won't be universal. That's just fine. Declaring winners always ignites passion, flame wars, and second-, third-, and fourth-guessing. We wouldn't expect anything less from you. There was plenty of the same fervor and clashing of opinions among the staff during the week. Choosing our All-Stars ain't easy. It shouldn't be.

Please tell us what you think about the changes. We're eager to hear your thoughts about what we can do to make All-Stars an even better experience. Hit us up at letters@automobilemag.com and let us know how you feel. **AM**

> ***No more picking the same car eight years in a row. We'll take a critical look at each year's crop and whittle it down.***

PORTRAIT: JOE VAUGHN

WORRY LESS.

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

BEST WARRANTY IN THE INDUSTRY

NEXEN TIRE purchases include:

NEXEN TOTAL COVERAGE WARRANTY™

2-YEAR LIMITED ROAD HAZARD WARRANTY

Covers your tires against damage caused by road hazards such as nails, glass, potholes or other debris.

36-MONTH ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Covers you for free tire change or tow service in case of a flat tire.

TREAD WEAR MILEAGE WARRANTY

Covers your tires against premature wear and credits you back for the miles that were under delivered.

NEXEN NEXEN TIRE

nexentireusa.com

21073 Pathfinder Road Suite 100, Diamond Bar, CA, 91765

Toll Free: 800-57-NEXEN | Tel: 909-923-4011 | Fax: 909-923-3991

Email: info@nexentireusa.com

Outmuscling the M3?

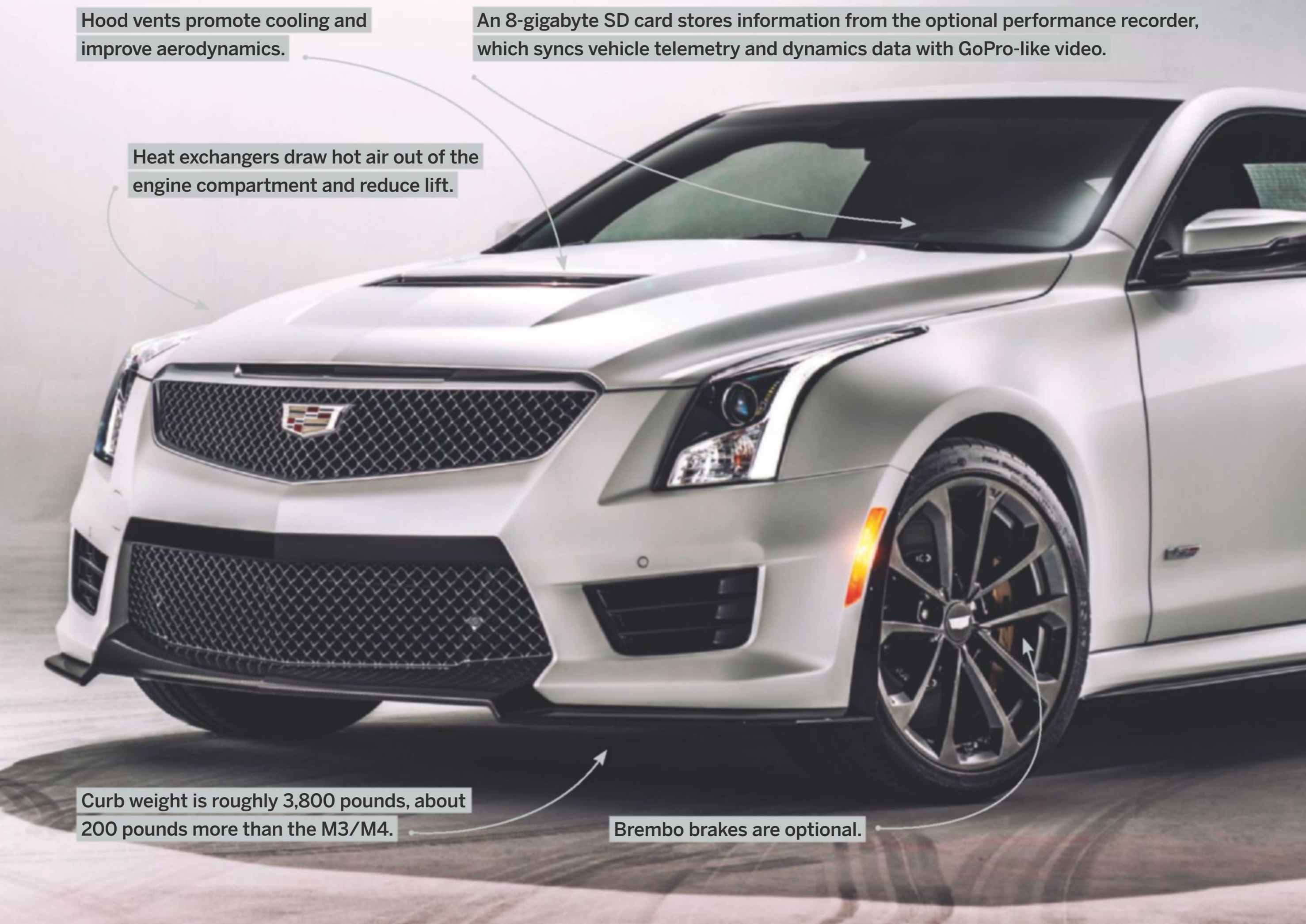
Can the all-new Cadillac ATS-V beat BMW's best?

CADILLAC V-SERIES CARS have come exclusively with V-8 engines—until now. You're looking at the all-new 2016 Cadillac ATS-V, which has a 3.6-liter twin-turbo V-6. Worry not: With more than 450 hp and 440 lb-ft of torque, the ATS-V, available as both a sedan and coupe, will outmuscle its key rivals, BMW's M3 and M4.

The goal, of course, is to do more than beat BMW only on the dyno. "One thing we've tried to do is improve efficiency and responsiveness," said ATS global product manager Ken Kornas. "Inertia is really the key to doing that." V engineers fitted the engine with titanium connecting rods, used titanium-aluminide pinwheels in the turbochargers, and put other hefty parts back on the shelf in favor of lighter replacements, all in the pursuit of lower weight.

The ATS-V will be available with an eight-speed automatic transmission or a rev-matching six-speed manual. Cadillac says the ATS-V, equipped with either gearbox, will go from 0 to 60 mph in less than 4 seconds on its way to a top speed north of 180 mph. "We've upgraded virtually every component in the vehicle," Kornas said. He promises superb ride-and-handing balance, the kind that made BMW's reputation. Standard magnetorheological dampers and an electronically controlled limited-slip differential are a good start.

There's a bolder, sportier look to match the car's boosted performance. Flared fenders accommodate a 1.6-inch-wider front track, and an optional carbon package includes a deeper front splitter, a taller rear lip spoiler, and hood vents, all made out of carbon fiber.



Hood vents promote cooling and improve aerodynamics.

An 8-gigabyte SD card stores information from the optional performance recorder, which syncs vehicle telemetry and dynamics data with GoPro-like video.

Heat exchangers draw hot air out of the engine compartment and reduce lift.

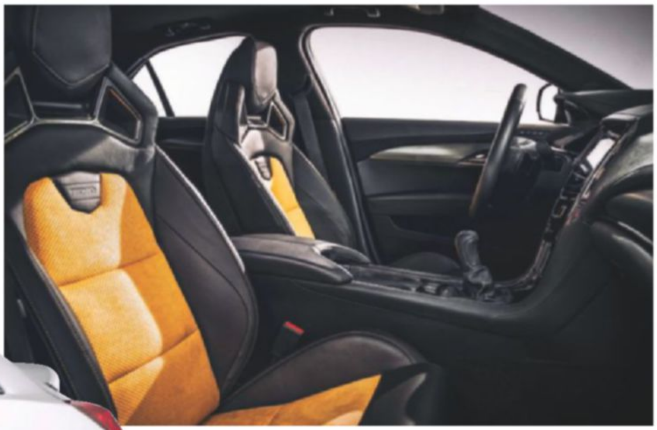
Curb weight is roughly 3,800 pounds, about 200 pounds more than the M3/M4.

Brembo brakes are optional.

SOHO IS TOO CHIC for a bunch of sound-alike names that all start with "CT." Come on, Cadillac. Seville would be better than CT6 for a model above the mainstream CTS. And what about De Ville for the CTS? Calais, previously an entry-luxury model below De Ville, would work for ATS. And you'd sell a few more ELRs with an Eldorado badge.

Unlike the towering tailfins on old Cadillacs, these styling elements serve clear functions. "You can't mix and match with the standard splitter or the standard spoiler; it'll throw the whole lift-balance off," exterior design chief Bob Boniface said. "These were really, really tuned in the wind tunnel. The carbon-fiber splitter and rear spoiler lend a significant amount of lift reduction. Top speed won't be quite as high because the carbon-fiber lip spoiler creates drag, but the cornering speeds are a lot higher."

The 2016 Cadillac ATS-V goes on sale this summer. Pricing will be competitive with its BMW counterparts, but will performance? As much as we don't want to, we'll have to wait to find out. —*TL*



Bolder look
Optional Recaro seats come in all black, black/saffron (pictured), or black/light gray color schemes.

Lightweight, 18-inch forged aluminum wheels help lower rotating mass.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ANDREW TRAHAN**

THE INDUSTRY

De Nysschen's Vision

Todd Lassa

CADILLAC IS MOVING ITS HEADQUARTERS TO NEW YORK'S SOHO. BIG DEAL. That move pales in importance next to Cadillac's decision to operate as its own business unit and report financial results independently of General Motors.

A big deal for Cadillac? Yes, but it's nothing groundbreaking for Cadillac's new president, Johan de Nysschen, who has been on the business side of Audi, which is under the same corporate umbrella but separate from Volkswagen, and Infiniti, which has a similar relationship with Nissan.

Operating as an independent unit gives de Nysschen time to rebuild a thin lineup and re-establish Cadillac in global markets, with a focus on expanding in China and Europe. "Consumers of premium goods, whether they be watches or high-end pens or handbags or automobiles, they tend to be internationally mobile," he said. "So it's important that they experience the brand consistently around the world."

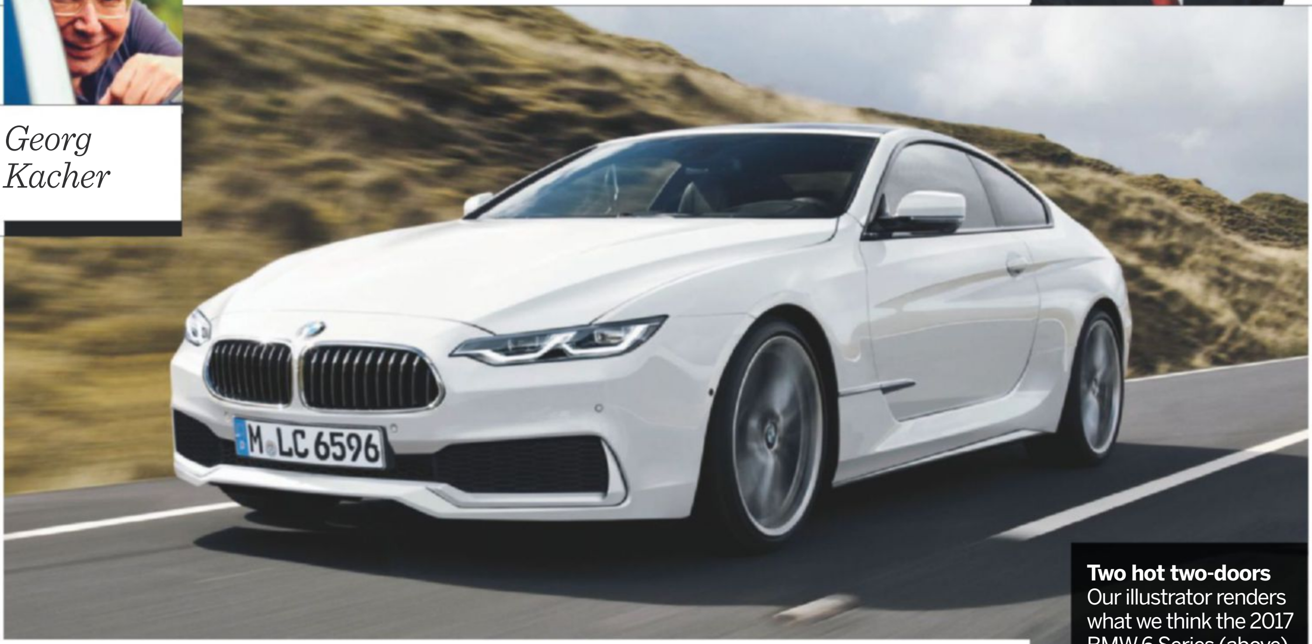
The first car coming out of this new Cadillac will be the CT6. It will look like a four-door version of Cadillac's sexy Elmiraj concept car and sit between the CTS (to become CT4 or CT5) and a larger, Mercedes S-Class-size sedan coming later in the decade. It makes its debut at the New York auto show this spring and goes on sale in the fall.

Other new entries on de Nysschen's wish list include one or two sports cars aimed at the Mercedes-Benz SL- and SLK-Class; a crossover smaller than the SRX and a larger, three-row crossover; and a second-generation plug-in electric hybrid.

We'll see if de Nysschen's considerable ambition and skill are enough to restore Cadillac, at long last, to global prominence. That'll require more than just a move into the heart of trendy SoHo. [For more on de Nysschen's plans, see NVH, page 30.]

Georg Kacher

SOME BAD NEWS TO GO WITH THE GOOD. If BMW chairman Norbert Reithofer has his way, all 2 Series models will switch from rear-wheel to front-wheel drive by 2021, so say "bye-bye" to emerging icons such as the M235i. That said, Reithofer is expected to step down in a year or two, giving whoever replaces him enough time left to squash this daft strategy.



Two hot two-doors
Our illustrator renders what we think the 2017 BMW 6 Series (above) and the highly anticipated BMW M2 (below) will look like.

A slimmer, sexier 6 Series for 2017

BMW may be a purveyor of crossovers and electric cars, but it still knows how to get lean and mean

THE CURRENT BMW 6 SERIES is hardly the ultimate driving machine. Pretty? Sure. But it's also overweight, poorly packaged, and soft-edged. Even the high-performance M6 is, in essence, a powerful grand touring car that feels more at home on the highway than on winding roads. All this will change with the debut of the new 6 Series for 2017.

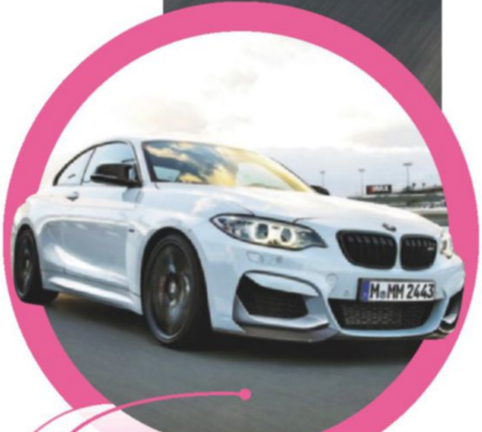
The big enabler for the change in character is an ambitious weight-loss program. Carbon-fiber elements, additional high-strength steel sections, a broader use of aluminum, and some magnesium and titanium parts should help the next 6 Series coupe drop to about 3,500 pounds, down from 4,000 pounds today. The next 6 Series will also have a lower center of gravity and a more balanced weight distribution. Shorter overhangs and a wider track should make the car feel more agile.

It also helps that the 6 Series' platform, shared with the 3, 5, and 7 Series, is more flexible than before. It means the various body styles—coupe, convertible, and Gran Coupe—can evolve separately to serve different audiences. To that end, the coupe and convertible will shrink to support the ambitious weight-saving efforts, but the four-door Gran Coupe will actually grow a bit longer to provide more interior room, addressing a shortcoming of most four-door coupes on the market today.

For all BMW's recent focus on green cars, don't expect a hybrid 6 Series, even though such technology is being developed for the next 7 Series. Instead, there will be a turbocharged inline-six engine delivering 350 hp and a V-8 rated at 475 hp. The M6 will get the 600-hp, twin-turbo V-8 from the 30th Anniversary Edition 2015 BMW M5.

The M6 will also feature active aerodynamic elements. (They'll probably be offered on the rest of the range as well.) Rear-wheel drive will again be standard, with all-wheel drive as an option on all models, including the M6.

The net result is a car that aims less at the Mercedes-Benz CLS and more at the Porsche—which is exactly what CEO Norbert Reithofer is promising.



ANOTHER TWO-DOOR BMW THAT HAS US HOT AND BOTHERED is the full-bore **M2** due out late next year. It will cost less than **$60,000**, sitting pretty between its siblings, the spritely **M235i** and the snarling **M4.** It will share both its suspension and its twin-turbocharged inline-six engine—slightly detuned to about **370 hp and 380 lb-ft of torque**—with the M4. Sounds like 1 Series M redux to us.

BMW 6 SERIES, M2: AUTO BILD/LARSON

Made for small journeys
and big journeys.
Start something special in the all-new **Honda CR-V Touring**.
HONDA

CR-V Touring model shown. ©2014 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

United, but not unified

*The **Tudor United SportsCar Championship** never really had a honeymoon period*

A NATIONAL DIVORCE RATE north of 50 percent suggests that nobody really knows whether a marriage is going to thrive. So one year after the clunky merger of Grand-Am Road Racing and the American Le Mans Series (ALMS), it's still too early for the Tudor United SportsCar Championship to talk about living happily ever after.

Petit Le Mans—the inaugural season's final race at Road Atlanta just north of Braselton, Georgia—was an epic party by any measure. There were 10 hours of racing from day into night, 55 cars in four classes, factory support from nearly a dozen manufacturers, thousands of on-track passes, several monster crashes, and more than 130,000 fans ringing the road course that snakes through the hilly terrain of rural Georgia.

"The series is definitely better," BMW Motorsport director Jens Marquardt says. "One field, great competition, good numbers, good TV coverage." Mike Hull, managing director of Chip Ganassi Racing, shares this upbeat assessment. "You're always going to have different opinions," he says, "but I think it's much better."

True, the unified series opened the season with self-inflicted black eyes caused by some clueless on-track performances by gentlemen drivers and questionable decisions by race officials. But thanks to solid car counts and healthy competition, attendance was generally up. Although television broadcasts ran hot and cold as a result of irregular programming, the TV package had enough reach to attract sponsors and an impressive array of manufacturers.

Despite these positive indicators, not many competitors were singing "Kumbaya" at Road Atlanta, and the general vibe seemed to be relief that the season was over rather than end-of-term elation. "There is nobody in the paddock who is happy. Nobody," one of them groused. "They have screwed this up beyond belief."

The problem was conflicting philosophies. ALMS favored faster, more exotic cars, gambling that technology would trump competition. Grand-Am tended toward the NASCAR model of limiting costs and innovation to promote close racing that looked dramatic on television. Generally speaking, deep-pocketed manufacturers were the backbone of ALMS while Grand-Am relied on a financial foundation of well-heeled gentlemen drivers.

With such different mindsets, there was clearly room for synergy. For example, by cherry-picking the best and most popular racetracks from the two old series, the Tudor United SportsCar Championship showcased the finest venues in North American road racing. "There are no mulligans anymore," Ferrari 458 racing driver Townsend Bell says. "I look forward to every racetrack we visit."

"There is nobody in the paddock who is happy. Nobody. They have screwed this up beyond belief."

Continental
HELLA
FOGARTY
BU. FRISSELLE
BR. FRISSEL
TUDOR
9
Action
RACING
IMSA
TOTAL
PATRON

WOULD YOU FOLLOW AN AUTONOMOUS RACING SERIES?
A driverless Audi RS7 lapped the Hockenheimring in Germany. It approached 140 mph on straights, bringing closer the day when computers can outdrive even the most talented humans. Yeah, it depresses us, too.

> ***Some competitors spoke darkly about conspiracies to stage-manage competition and turn racing into a "circus."***

But in other areas, Tudor went astray. "It's better to have one strong series rather than two weak ones," Porsche team owner Alex Job says. "But if you've only got one option, it needs to be the best of both worlds, and it wasn't. In some respects, it was the worst of both. The series definitely had its challenges over the year."

The main challenge—and everybody recognized it as soon as the wedding date was announced—was shoehorning cars built for significantly different formulas into a common rules package. Four car classes emerged. The production-based Grand Touring (GT) cars were relatively easy to work out. Two classes—GT Le Mans (GTLM) and GT Daytona (GTD)—were based largely on existing rules. The single-model Prototype Challenge (PC) class for spec prototypes also carried over as-is, primarily as a home for gentlemen racers. But at the top of the totem pole, balancing the performance of Grand-Am's comparatively simple Daytona Prototype (DP) cars and ALMS' much more sophisticated Le Mans Prototype 2 (LMP2) cars required serious marriage counseling.

The solution involved substantially upgrading the DP cars. As it happens, DP cars won nine of 11 races, but that success didn't come cheap. Racing team owner Michael Shank says he spent $1.1 million on go-fast parts and development of his lone Riley-Ford. "I'm sure that some people spent even more than that," he says. "Those costs really hurt us." Several LMP2 teams didn't even bother to show up for the season finale.

> ***"I don't think the future of sports car racing has ever looked this good."***

The series continued to adjust performance during the season by allowing bigger wings or restricting air intakes. Predictably, teams on the short end of the balance-of-performance stick weren't happy campers. Some competitors complained about "egregious" and "arbitrary" rule updates, and others spoke darkly about conspiracies to stage-manage competition and turn racing into a "circus."

Still, many competitors are convinced that this sort of NASCAR-ization is exactly what sports car racing needs to thrive. "Ultimately," says driver Boris Said, who's logged plenty of time in both GT cars and prototypes, "it would be nice if every manufacturer won at least one race. Who cares how they do it? It makes for a better show, and that's what fans want to see. I don't think the future of sports car racing has ever looked this good."

Two days after Petit Le Mans, and only two-and-a-half years after returning to GT racing, Chrysler shuttered its successful Viper program. Although most observers believe this decision was driven mostly by weak Viper sales rather than dissatisfaction with the Tudor racing series, rumors swirl that several other teams will be leaving for greener pastures, the more ambitious ones going to the international World Endurance Championship and others opting for the lower-profile Pirelli World Challenge.

No doubt, there will be fallout during the offseason. But the majority of competitors are bound to return, and some newcomers are expected when the 2015 season begins at Daytona. After all, marriage vows usually include a line about "for better or worse." By definition, the Tudor United SportsCar Championship is a compromise. But maybe that's not such a bad thing. Because behind every enduring marriage is a judicious amount of give and take. *–Preston Lerner*

WHELEN
Continental
Express
EMCO
CHAMPION
OMP

PHOTOGRAPHY **ROBERT KERIAN**

WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO ON THE ROAD: Jenny Lewis' "The Voyager." The third solo album from 38-year-old Lewis, former frontwoman for now-dead indie rock band Rilo Kiley, it debuted at No. 9 on the Billboard 200 chart. Full of upbeat music that masks sorrowful lyrics, Lewis drew from personal strife to craft an album that's as moving as it is addictive.

Lake Pepin

Pepin, Wisconsin

Pepin, Wisconsin, 90 minutes southeast of the Twin Cities in Minnesota, is best known as the birthplace of author Laura Ingalls Wilder, but let's be honest—Pepin isn't "known" at all. That's fine. Maybe then Lake Pepin, which sits on the border of Minnesota and Wisconsin where the Mississippi River is at its widest natural point, will remain bright blue and peaceful. After a day on the water, drive along the secluded roads that wind through the sweeping fields, thick forests, and steep hillsides around Pepin. Head south on Great River Road, then cross into Minnesota near Wabasha to run 3 miles of Highway 60 that you don't want to miss.

▸ TRIP NOTES

Rooms at the Great River Amish Inn are reasonably priced—about $80 per night—and are full of handmade oak furniture.

Find a designated driver and visit Villa Bellezza, a family-owned winery that offers free tastings.

Try Harbor View Café's Washington king salmon baked in parchment paper.

LAKE PEPIN: **JOSH HWAY**

DANIEL STEIGER

LIST PRICE
$779.00

80% OFF
NOW ONLY
$179
+S&P
YOU SAVE
$600

The Daniel Steiger
SPORTSTECH

PRECISION ENGINEERING FOR YOU WRIST

The Daniel Steiger Sportstech Rose Gold and IP black fused finish gives this prestigious sports watch a luxurious feel and is now available direct from the manufacturer at the astonishingly low price of $179 - a saving of $600 on the retail price of $779. So how can we make an offer like this? The answer is beautifully simple. We have no middleman to pay. No retail overheads to pay and not the usual mark-up to make, which on luxury items (including watches) can be enormous. We just make beautiful watches, beautifully simple to buy. Magnificent presentation case and 5 year unlimited movement warranty included with each timepiece.

- 18K Rose Gold Plated IP Black Fused
- Premium Grade 316L Stainless Steel
- Split Second Chronograph Movement
- Date Window
- 3 Subdials (1/10th Sec,Min,Sec)
- Water Resistant To 3ATM (96ft)
- Security Divers Buckle
- Adjustable Bracelet

5 YEAR MOVEMENT WARRANTY

Also Available In 18K Plated Gold

CALL NOW TOLL FREE 24/7 ON 1-877 550 9876
And Quote Promo Code:

30 DAY MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

AUT14DSPT

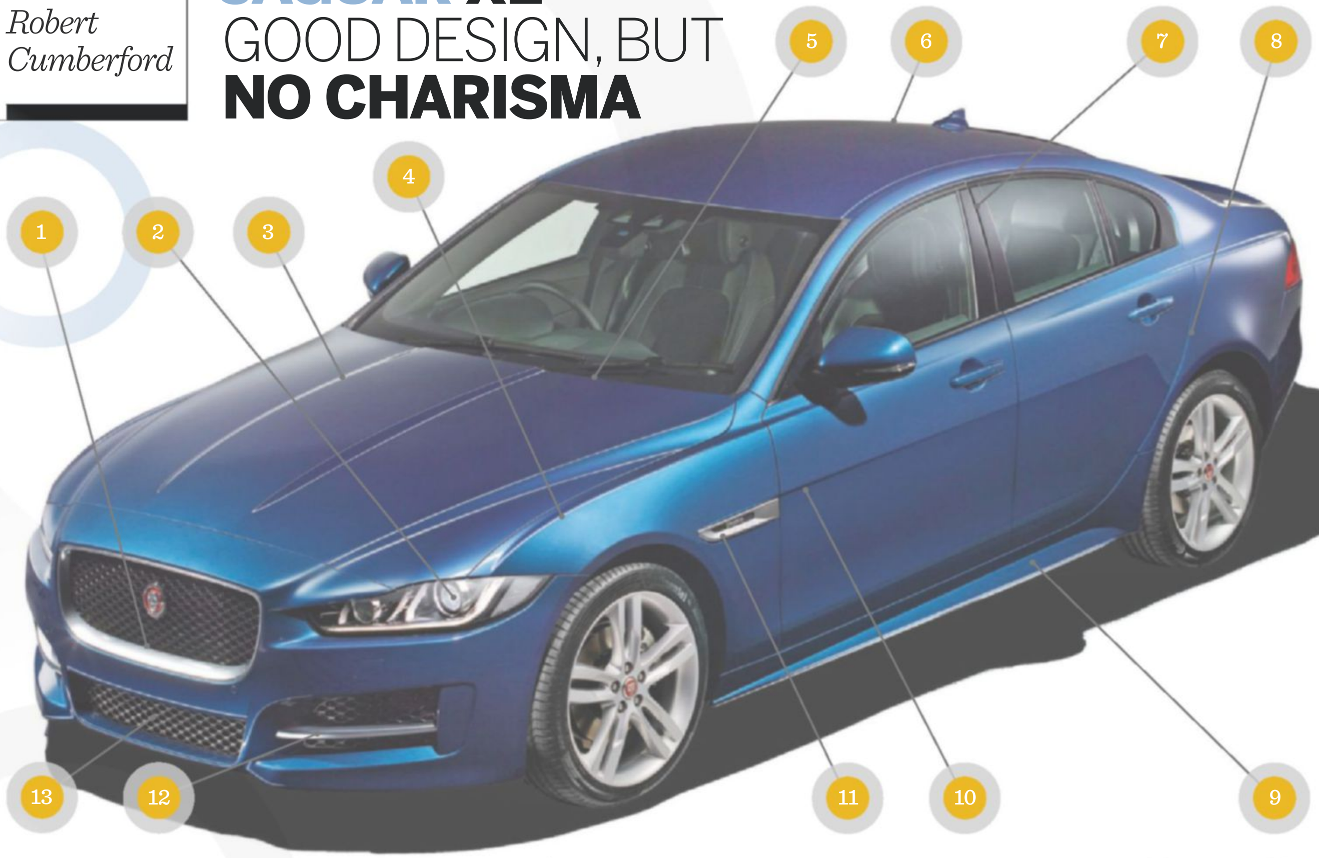
LIMITED STOCK AVAILABLE

OR order online at www.timepiecesusa.com/aut14D And Enter Promo Code AUT14DSPT

Timepieces International Inc, 3580 NW 56th Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33309

Robert Cumberford

JAGUAR XE GOOD DESIGN, BUT NO CHARISMA



JAGUARS HAVE LONG FOLLOWED A fairly regular cycle of SS-DD-SS (Scintillating Star, Deadly Dud, repeat). In the 1940s, my U.K.-born father took me to see the Mk IV and the just-arrived Mk V sedans in Southern California. Today, I see the Mk IV as a classical early-'30s design, a Scintillating Star. But back then I thought it was just a newly built old car, decades behind the times. The Mk V was just a fat, heavy, and stupid-looking Deadly Dud. Both seemed awful anachronisms compared to tail-finned '48 Cadillacs or step-down Hudsons.

The subsequent Mk VII (there wasn't a VI) was very nice, a little old-fashioned but—in a Packard-like way—distinguished in its conservatism and a Scintillating Star. The VIII and IX models were slightly redecorated Mk VIIs, but the Mk X was a huge, rather ungainly Deadly Dud beast, followed in 1968 by the best sedan Sir William Lyons ever did, the XJ. It was so good that with its next two replacements—the XJ-40 project and the all-aluminum XJ8 created under Ford ownership—the three looked like peas in a pod, even though they were all entirely different cars underneath.

The same on-off cycle affected the sports cars; the XK120/140s were both good-looking Scintillating Stars. They were followed by the (to me) Deadly Dud XK150, which in turn was replaced by one of the greatest sports cars of all time, the E-Type, itself replaced by another DD model, the XJ-S. And so it has gone.

I didn't like the 1955 2.4-liter saloon, later called Mk I, nor the Mk II, although many do. Jaguar moved away from smaller cars until it built the S-Type, a retro Mk II-style sedan with mid-1950s styling and modern Ford engineering, in the late '90s. Let's call that OK, not an SS. But then the DD Ford Mondeo-in-a-Jaguar-clown-suit X-Type came along, much to the shame of both Ford and Jaguar. The XF successor properly belongs in the SS category, and now we have the XE, which is neither SS nor DD. It has not a trace of exoticism, which is hard to understand or accept, given the brilliance of the current XJ sedan, our 2011 Design of the Year. I had hoped that the XE would carry on the imaginative, individual, and exciting style of the XJ. It doesn't.

Is it a good design? Yes. It has the desirable attributes of good proportions, a light structure, excellent mechanicals, and it is quietly beautiful. But it lacks panache, pizzazz, excitement, all the visceral elements that kept Jaguar in business long after any other company with as few sales, as poor a quality record, and as up-and-down an ownership history would have vanished into oblivion.

At least we can imagine, given the recurring SS-DD-SS pattern, that the next small Jaguar will be brilliant, as it should be. **AM**

14
15
XDY 446

FRONT 3/4 VIEW

1. **DERIVED FROM THE 1968 XJ,** this is a great grille. It has come to signify Jaguar as much as the XK-120/Mk II vertical oval grilles once did.

2. **THERE IS SOME** similarity to the beautiful XJ lamp cluster, and by cutting the corners back, the hood seems even longer than it is.

3. **A SLIGHTLY RAISED** section in the center of the hood stiffens the panel and provides a nice emphasis to the visual length of the hood.

4. **A SHARP EDGE** to the front fender peak accentuates the visual width of the front end and fades to nothing just above the door handle.

5. **THE GAP BETWEEN** the hood and the windshield is kept to a strict minimum.

6. **THE ROOF PROFILE** is a gentle arc, an almost-fastback, far removed from the dramatic XJ design.

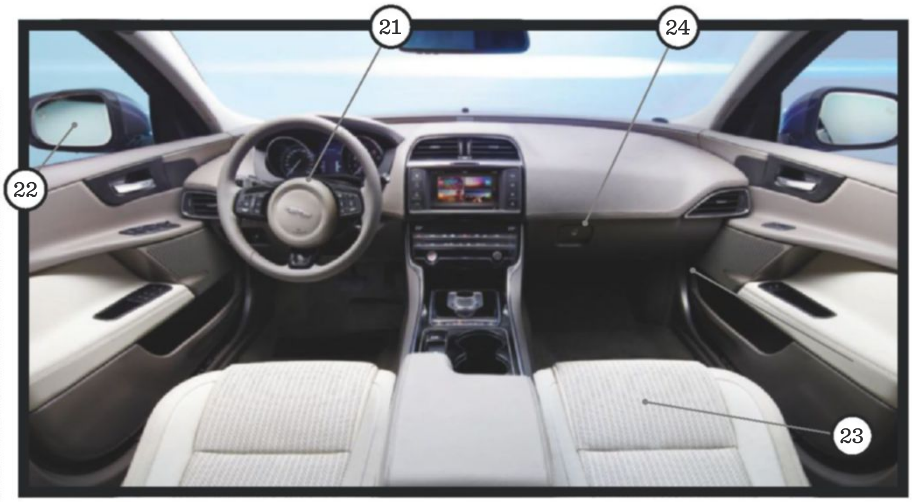
7. **THE BLACKOUT WINDOW** profile is a nice touch on Sport models, more elegant than the chrome-strip base versions.

8. **THE REAR DOOR CUT** is a lovely curve in profile and emphasizes the rear shoulder beginning in the door skin.

9. **THIS "RUNNING BOARD" SILL** section presumably has a positive aerodynamic influence and makes for a simple bottom to the doors.

10. **THE SLIGHTLY UNDERCUT CREASE** derived from the fender side trim is subtle and effective.

11. **WHAT TO SAY** about this trim piece? It's not necessary, but neither is it obtrusive. Let's just commend the restraint demonstrated, in that it's not bigger.



12. **THIS BRIGHT-FINISH BAR** across the lower corner inlets is elegant and helps emphasize the width of the front-end graphical composition.

13. **THIS TRAPEZOIDAL INLET** below the grille is all-business and is clearly separated from the lower corner inlets.

REAR 3/4 VIEW

14. **THE TAILLIGHTS LACK** anything to make identification of the car easy at night. They could be on an Asian economy car.

15. **THE CHROME "LEAPER"** is absolutely necessary for identity, because neither forms nor details provide it.

16. **THE NICEST PART** of the rear is the broad shoulder that gives some sense of rear-wheel-drive architecture. The semi-fastback roof tapers inward in plan view.

17. **THE EDGE OF THE HOOD FORM,** coming from the A-pillar to the grille, gives thrust to the nose, with a nice, flattened plane between it and the fender profile peak.

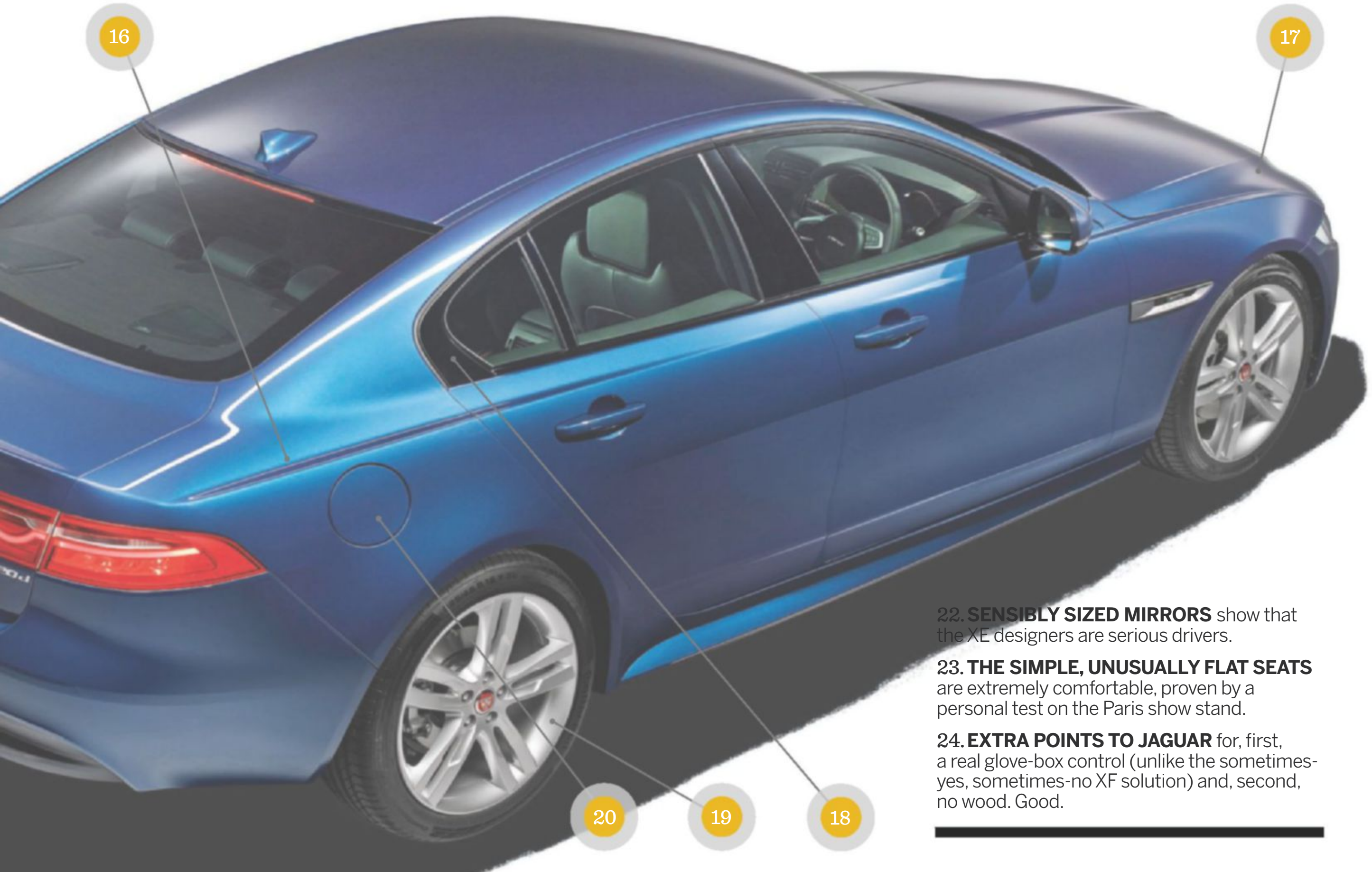
18. **THE WIDENED BASE** for the rear-quarter light trim clearly contrasts with BMW's legendary Hofmeister kink.

19. **THE OVERALL TIRE DIAMETER** is about the same for all the wheel sizes chosen for the XE, assuring a nice fit with the wheel openings in the skin.

20. **DESIGNERS MUST HAVE CHOSEN** the flattest side panel for this huge, circular gas filler door.

INTERIOR VIEW

21. **THE SURPRISING OFFSET** of the circular airbag housing with the circular steering wheel rim makes one think of planetary gearsets. A brave—and smart—execution.



22. **SENSIBLY SIZED MIRRORS** show that the XE designers are serious drivers.

23. **THE SIMPLE, UNUSUALLY FLAT SEATS** are extremely comfortable, proven by a personal test on the Paris show stand.

24. **EXTRA POINTS TO JAGUAR** for, first, a real glove-box control (unlike the sometimes-yes, sometimes-no XF solution) and, second, no wood. Good.

controversial redesign or poster child for 'No Boring Cars'

Revealed

A DRAMATIC, CONTROVERSIAL REDESIGN OF THE POSTER CHILD FOR 'NO BORING CARS'

2016 MAZDA MX-5 MIATA

THE MAZDA DESIGNERS MUST HAVE BEEN STARING OUT THE WINDOW looking at a Honda S2000 because there are a lot of similarities. My own 2005 Honda S2000 AP2 is red, just like your cover car. I like the new Miata, and it hits the bull's-eye on continuing the tradition of the Lotus Elan, but it doesn't look to me like they started with a clean sheet of paper. It will be interesting to see Robert Cumberford's design analysis of it.

STEVE SHOGREN
VIA INTERNET

PAINFUL TRUTH

MAZDA NORTH AMERICA'S DESIGN director speaks the painful truth when he says the new Miata's "visual connection to the [Lotus] Elan is more distant." From the side, the view is BMW Z3, while the front is Honda S2000. I prefer the Elan connection, but still I like the new Miata.

JIM G. VANOVER
PIKEVILLE, KENTUCKY

AS A DRIVER OF A MAZDA MX-5 Cup race car, the 2016 MX-5 may be the first Miata in my personal garage. A gorgeous exterior, lighter curb weight, and the same enthusiast-oriented persona will do it for anyone who appreciates real driving.

TIMOTHY PAUL
VIA INTERNET

DON'T YOU JUST WONDER WHAT Fiat is going to do to this brilliant little car? Turbocharged engine from the Fiat 500 Abarth?

NICK MOLNAR
VIA INTERNET

FRONT-WHEEL-DRIVE DKW 3=6

I HAVE OWNED SEVEN DKW Sonderklasse (3=6) cars ("2016 Audi TTS vs. 1958 DKW Monza," November). All post-WWII DKWs and IFAs (the East German version) had front-wheel drive with free-wheeling. With free-wheeling (which was technically illegal in the U.S.), one could downshift without over-revving the engine. And with a hand brake for the rear wheels and power for the front wheels, it was possible to do a U-turn at speed and stay in one lane. Then came the Mini (Austin or Morris).

KEN ANDERSEN
WEST GROVE, PENNSYLVANIA

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT CAR enthusiasts around the planet are relying on your experts at *Automobile* to settle bets on car facts, and they're going to lose confidence if they catch you making stuff up.

BOB POESCHL
BOULDER, COLORADO

We regret the error—Ed.

KITMAN IS A MASOCHIST

YET AGAIN, I FIND MYSELF reading about Kitman's masochistic love affair with yet another of the flimsy, uncomfortable, unreliable deathtraps he seems fatally attracted to ("California Steaming," November). Like a moth to a flame, he just can't resist under-engineered go-karts that flout the very nanny-state protections that liberal pundits like him always advocate. Kitman's personal car collection, for which he seems perpetually mired in debt, checks every box for anachronistic, unreliable, eccentric European machinery far removed from any practical consideration yet totally lacking in exoticism. It's an automotive torture chamber.

STEVE BOEHME
PEEBLES, OHIO

Yes, isn't he great?!—Ed.

FERRARIS IN AMERICA

SADNESS IS NOT AN EMOTION I usually experience reading your magazine, but there it was, the story of chasing down the last Ferrari with a manual transmission. As for my dreams, a Porsche 911 Carrera now holds the prime parking spot.

MICHAEL BRUCE
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Another car with a problematic future for the manual transmission—Ed.

AS A CHILD, MY FATHER, WALTER Luftman, would take me on his annual pilgrimage to Luigi Chinetti's garage in Manhattan to buy a Ferrari to race in the upcoming season ("The Man Who Made Ferrari's Fortune in America," November). The deal was always difficult, but Dad said that when it was done, Chinetti would always say, "But enough of business, let us talk about the sport we love." Then it was off to the Casa Rex for pasta washed down with Lambrusco (and a Coca-Cola for me). Thanks for the memories of Ferrari's 60 years in America.

MICHAEL LUFTMAN
VIA INTERNET

RANDOM THOUGHTS

MR. DAVIS' MANTRA WAS "No Boring Cars." Just wondering if it has changed to "No American Cars."

PHIL LANGE
DEWITT, MICHIGAN

***Write:** Automobile Magazine, 831 S. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245. E-mail: letters@automobilemag.com*
Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

This Necklace is NOT for Sale…

…It's yours for FREE*

*No kidding. Only Stauer can give you 200 carats of genuine amethyst for **NOTHING**.*

You may think you understand the concept of "priceless" jewelry. For years, "priceless" meant "astronomically expensive." Owning "priceless" treasures was a rare privilege reserved for celebrities, billionaires, and royalty. The best most of us could do was dream. Until now...

Stauer smashes the luxury status quo with the release of our **FREE* 200-Carat *Lusso Amethyst Necklace***. That's right, we said **FREE**... as in "priceless." No charge.* ZERO dollars.* Call now and we'll send you this impressive helping of genuine amethyst (independently appraised at $295) for **FREE**. We cut the price 100% and you pay only $19.95, our charge for shipping, processing and insurance. There are no tricks or gimmicks. You aren't obligated to spend another dime or dollar with us... although we make it VERY hard to resist.

Why give away jewelry? We want your attention. Once you get a closer look at our rare gemstone treasures and vintage-inspired watches, and once you discover the guilt-free fun of getting "Luxury for Less," we're betting that you'll fall in love with Stauer. If not? Keep your **FREE *Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** anyway. No hard feelings.

A collection of purple perfection. Your ***Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** is a 200-carat symphony of smooth purple genuine gemstones. Each gemstone's shape and translucence ignites the velvety, violet hues. The polished amethysts are hand-set on double-knotted jeweler's thread, and the stunning 18" necklace (with 2" extender) secures with a gold-finished lobster clasp. Once you wear it, you'll see that it hangs with the same weight and elegance as similar strands that sell for hundreds more.

One more surprise... If we had our way, we'd send your ***Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** with no shipping charge. Unfortunately, the rising cost of gas and freight makes that impossible. But, to sweeten the deal, we'll include a **$20 Stauer Gift Coupon** with your **FREE** necklace. Amethyst is one of the world's most coveted gemstones and our supply is extremely limited. An offer this good will not last very long. Call to reserve your **FREE *Lusso Amethyst Necklace*** today and treat yourself (or someone you love) to a brilliant new definition of priceless luxury!

200 carats of
pure luxury
appraised at $295†...
yours FREE!*

Necklace enlarged to show luxurious detail.

Lusso Amethyst Necklace (200 ctw) ~~$199~~**

Your Cost With Offer Code— **FREE***

***pay only shipping & processing of $19.95.**

You must use the offer code below to receive this special free necklace.

1-800-859-1680

Rating of A+

Offer Code LAN176-01
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer® 14101 Southcross Drive W., Dept. LAN176-01,
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

200 ctw of genuine amethyst • Gold-finished spacers • 18"+2" length necklace

* This offer is valid in the United States (and Puerto Rico) except in TX, FL, CO, OK, RI, NH, WV, OR, SC, VA and ID. These state residents will be charged one cent ($.01) + shipping & processing for the item. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. Offer subject to state and local regulations. Not valid with any other offers and only while supplies last. This offer is limited to one item per shipping address. ** *Free is only for customers who use the offer code versus the original Stauer.com price. † For more information concerning the appraisal, visit **http://www.stauer.com/appraisedvalues.asp**.*

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™

2015 Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

THE FASTEST SEDAN IN THE WORLD? **HELL YES!**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Oh, those zany Dodge boys. First they launch the headline-stealing Challenger Hellcat from the bowels of, well, Detroit. Why not try a 707-horsepower version of that favored four-door of NASCAR families, the Charger?

At this point, a Ram Hellcat wouldn't be a surprise, one that might erase memories of the god-awful Ram SRT-10 of 2004-2006.

Unlike that Viper-powered pickup, whose no-stability volatility seemed designed by the Grim Reaper himself, the Charger and Challenger 'Cats are something special precisely because they're not truly evil. Instead, the Charger Hellcat is like a devil on one shoulder, angel on the other. The devil whispers, "Yo, pal, there isn't a cop for three counties. Let's try for that 11-second quarter mile, the 204-mph top speed, or fry some rubber for lunch." The angel rolls his eyes and says, "Please. We're picking up the kids. Let's relax, enjoy this glorious Wi-Fi connection, and dial the new drive modes to Full Barcalounger. Besides, you got a ticket last week."

Those dueling spirits were highlighted on a burbling cruise from Washington, D.C., to Summit Point Raceway in West Virginia. There, the Dodge raged in shockingly easy-peasy fashion for a 4,575-pound *Amurican* muscle sedan.

In fact, the Hellcat proved nearly as civilized as its less bodacious Charger bros. Lineup-wide 2015 upgrades include a snazzier interior and an eight-speed automatic with a gated electronic console lever. A shrink-wrapped, scallop-doored body better disguises its bulky proportions. The tasteful front end includes an air-slurping mesh grille, Naca hood intake, and dual heat extractors, all to feed and cool the beast: the supercharged, 6.2-liter V-8 with 707 horses and 650 lb-ft.

The rest is carry-over from the ponycar Hellcat, including Brembo brakes with front 15.4-inch rotors and six-piston calipers, three-way adjustable Bilstein shocks, and robust gauges, steering wheel, and seats.

Compared with its Challenger cousin, the Charger is 160 pounds heavier and there's no manual transmission choice. But the ride is more compliant, with spring rates softened by 27 percent front, 10 percent rear. And it's quieter inside, thanks to added underhood insulation and more restrictive middle exhaust resonators.

The factory-measured 3.7-second scamper to 60 mph and an NHRA-certified 11-flat quarter mile are both

0.2 second behind the two-door. The insane 204 mph top speed, however, is 5 mph beyond the Challenger's.

Despite the roomier back seat and comfier ride, the sedan feels just as madcap. As in the Challenger, owners can electronically limit horsepower to 500 to conserve premium unleaded, and soothe steering, transmission, throttle, and stability programs via the touchscreen or the secondary black key fob.

But the red key unleashes the full satanic majesty, making the Hellcat what Dodge bills as the world's quickest, most powerful production sedan. Not a $100,000 AMG Mercedes. Not a $300,000 Bentley. But a Dodge, priced at $64,990.

On track, this Charger is stable and tractable for such a brutish machine. The body leans, but there's no wallow. Steering is largely mute, but 20-inch Pirelli P Zero tires offer ample aural warning before they give up the ghost. And that sound: a smoky stock-car *braaap* that owners will replay like their favorite song.

Despite its assaultive power, this Charger is too softly sprung and porky to dominate a track. The Camaro Z/28 would use its superior everything—aside from brute force—to dispatch the Dodge.

Yet as a daily driving sociopath, either Hellcat is arguably more appropriate than the track-centric Z/28. Two doors or four, the Hellcat will whup the Z/28 in most any street contest, is more comfortable and deluxe, and costs $10,000 to $14,000 less.

Either way, let the Motown battles rage.

—Lawrence Ulrich

Hellaciously quick The Charger is 160 pounds heavier than its Challenger cousin, but the extra weight doesn't keep it from a higher top speed.

The Specs

ON SALE: Now
PRICE: $64,990
ENGINE: 6.2-liter supercharged OHV 16-valve V-8/707 hp @ 6,000 rpm, 650-lb-ft @ 4,800 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 8-speed automatic
LAYOUT: 4-door, 5-passenger, front-engine, RWD sedan
L x W x H: 200.8 x 75.0 x 58.3 in
WHEELBASE: 120.4 in
WEIGHT: 4,575 lb

The result is a Dodge-tested 3.7-second scamper to 60 mph, 0.2 second behind the two-door. It can also reach an insane 204 mph, 5 mph beyond the Challenger.

DODGE
CHARGER
SRT
MICHIGAN
043M078
MANUFACTURER

2015 Renault Twingo

READY FOR THE NEXT **REAR-ENGINE REVOLUTION?**

NANTES, FRANCE

The 2015 Renault Twingo, the product of a Renault-Mercedes joint venture, is well-armed to be a winner in its specific niche—a strictly urban runabout for short trips. With its little engine tucked beneath the floor ahead of the rear axle, the front wheels can assume extreme steering angles that make for a far tighter turning circle than typical front-wheel-drive compacts.

For the first day, we drove the almost-top model, with an 898cc, turbocharged version of the three-cylinder Smart block shared with the forthcoming Smart Forfour. It was a disappointment. There's plenty of power, but its delivery is annoyingly irregular. A constant throttle results in unpleasant surges, not linear acceleration. The variable-ratio electric power steering feels imprecise, and the car doesn't seem to track steadily. Ride quality, on the optional 16-inch aluminum wheels, is mediocre at best. We remarked on this to Christian Steyer, the straight-talking chief engineer for the Twingo project, and after confirming what we'd observed, he assured us that all would be well by the time deliveries began.

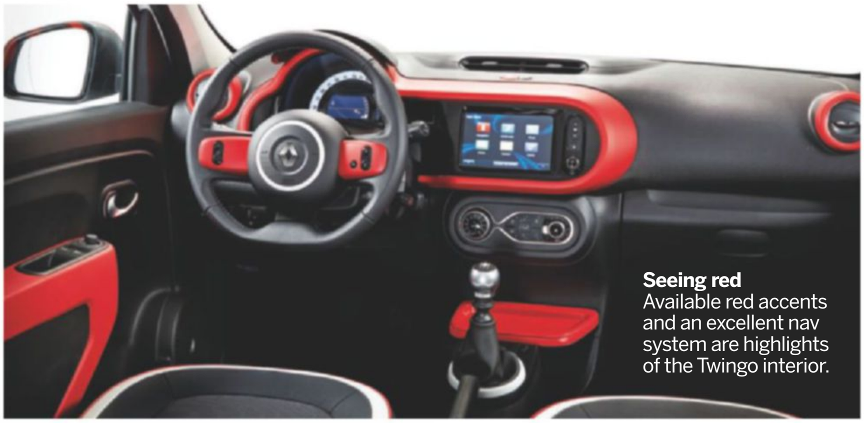
An afternoon of highway driving revealed some positives, such as the exceptionally comfortable seats; fine climate control; and an accurate, easy-to-understand (optional) navigation system. Interior trim fit and finish is very good—for a Renault, extraordinary. The overall impression was of a potentially outstanding but seriously under-developed product.

The second day's drive was in the lower-powered, bigger-displacement, naturally aspirated 70-hp base model, which wears 15-inch steel wheels. It was a revelation. Power was more than adequate and delivery was smooth. Fixed-ratio steering, still electrically assisted, is a bit slower than the variable unit but far more agreeable in its sense of precise response. The entry-level navigation system, standard in all models equipped with a radio, is simply a Bluetooth connection to your smartphone, which can be plugged in for a constant recharge. It works beautifully.

On the labyrinthine route through the city of Nantes, France, the justification for the rear engine was clear. Not one four-seat city car, from the Fiat 500 to the Opel Agila, could have followed the new Twingo; they are all constrained by the limitations of their steering angles due to to front-wheel drive.

The entry-level Twingo costs $13,960 in France, and a loaded-up SL Edition One tops out at $20,295, including France's 20 percent value added tax. Quite a bargain.

The base model, which preceded the turbocharged variant in the development process, is a terrific vehicle, and its excellent behavior leads us to believe Monsieur Steyer's assurance that all will be good with the turbo by time it debuts. Once people experience the agility and maneuverability of the Twingo, we'd be surprised if others don't take up rear engines. Again. —*Robert Cumberford*



Seeing red
Available red accents and an excellent nav system are highlights of the Twingo interior.

Twingo unchained
The lovable first Renault Twingo debuted two decades ago. The latest version was co-developed with the new Smart Forfour.

The Specs

ON SALE: Now (Europe only)
BASE PRICE: $13,960-$17,000 (est.) (France)
ENGINES: 1.0-liter DOHC 12-valve I-3/70 hp @ 6,000 rpm, 67 lb-ft @ 2,850 rpm; 0.9-liter turbocharged DOHC 12-valve I-3/89 hp @ 5,500 rpm, 100 lb-ft @ 2,500 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 5-speed manual
LAYOUT: 4-door, 4-passenger, rear-engine, RWD sedan
L X W X H: 141.5 x 64.8 x 61.2 in
WHEELBASE: 98.1 in
WEIGHT: 1,905-2,079 lb

Wear it today for only $29
Our Lowest Price EVER on a Classic Dress Watch!
Stauer
3ATM WATER RESISTANT
10
TAKE 85% OFF INSTANTLY!
When you use your INSIDER OFFER CODE

Back Again for the First Time

Our modern take on a 1929 classic, yours for the unbelievably nostalgic price of ONLY $29!

You have a secret hidden up your sleeve. Strapped to your wrist is a miniature masterpiece, composed of hundreds of tiny moving parts that measure the steady heartbeat of the universe. You love this watch. And you still smile every time you check it, because you remember that you almost didn't buy it. You almost turned the page without a second thought, figuring that the ***Stauer Metropolitan Watch* for only $29** was just too good to be true. But now you know how right it feels to be wrong.

Our lowest price EVER for a classic men's dress watch. How can we offer the ***Metropolitan*** for less than $30? The answer is simple. Stauer has sold over one million watches in the last decade and many of our clients buy more than one. Our goal isn't to sell you a single watch, our goal is to help you fall in love with Stauer's entire line of vintage-inspired luxury timepieces and jewelry. And every great relationship has to start somewhere...

Tells today's time with yesterday's style. The Metropolitan is exactly the kind of elegant, must-have accessory that belongs in every gentleman's collection next to his British cufflinks and Italian neckties. Inspired by a rare 1929 Swiss classic found at auction, the ***Metropolitan Watch*** revives a distinctive and debonair retro design for 21st-century men of exceptional taste.

The ***Stauer Metropolitan*** retains all the hallmarks of a well-bred wristwatch including a gold-finished case, antique ivory guilloche face, blued Breguet-style hands, an easy-to-read date window at the 3 o'clock position, and a crown of sapphire blue. It secures with a crocodile-patterned, genuine black leather strap and is water resistant to 3 ATM.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. We are so sure that you will be stunned by the magnificent ***Stauer Metropolitan Watch*** that we offer a 60-day money back guarantee. If you're not impressed after wearing it for a few weeks, return it for a full refund of the purchase price. But once the first compliments roll in, we're sure that you'll see the value of time well spent!

Stauer Metropolitan Timepiece— ~~$199~~

Offer Code Price **$29** + S&P ***Save $170***

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.

1-888-870-9149

Your Offer Code: MTW260-02
Please use this code when you order to receive your discount.

Stauer®
14101 Southcross Drive W.,
Dept. MTW260-02
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.stauer.com

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS
Rating of A+

Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices™

Luxurious gold-finished case with sapphire-colored crown - Crocodile-embossed leather strap - Band fits wrists 6 ¼"–8 ¾" - Water-resistant to 3 ATM

2015 **Ford F-150**

AMERICA'S BEST-SELLER LIGHTENS UP

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

You may have heard that the 2015 Ford F-150 wears an aluminum body. Nearly a year after its debut at the Detroit auto show, we've come to Texas to learn something more basic: Is it any good?

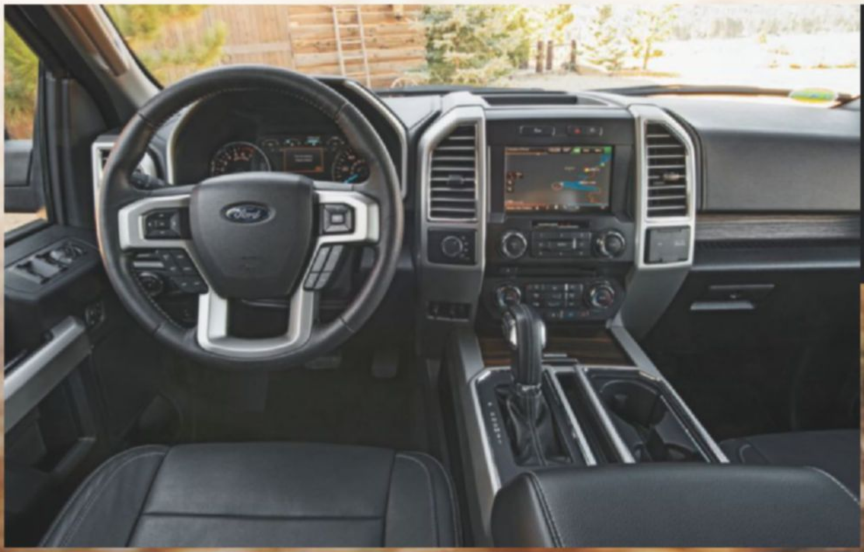
The 2015 F-150 has had an unusually long gestation period, dating back to 2009. That's how long it takes to engineer a new frame and body, retool a factory, and train thousands of body shops in the art of repairing aluminum.

For all that time and effort, the 2015 F-150's styling looks like a simple mid-cycle refresh. Upper trim-level models are more recognizable at night, thanks to their LED headlights and taillights. A function-before-form approach also informs the cabin. Logically laid out, XXL-size buttons and knobs dominate the dashboard.

The success of the EcoBoost V-6 in the last-generation F-150—43 percent of F-150 buyers opted for it—leads Ford to believe folks will accept even less displacement in the form of a 325-hp, 2.7-liter turbo V-6.

The new engine is very responsive, with little turbo lag and plenty of passing power at higher rpm. It does not run out of breath or send the six-speed automatic transmission hunting for gears, even as we climb some of the gradients that give Texas Hill Country its name. The 3.5-liter EcoBoost V-6 is now the top engine in the F-150 lineup and feels up to the task. Sounds like it, too, thanks to the V-8-like noise that's piped through the truck's speakers. (Upper trim-level trucks equipped with the 2.7-liter V-6 have the same technology.) A naturally aspirated 3.5-liter V-6 and a 5.0-liter V-8 will still be offered for bargain buyers and traditionalists.

Of course, the performance of these engines owes much to the fact that they have less truck to lug around. Ford says the aluminum body, along with a stiffer and lighter new frame composed of more high-strength steel than before, cuts some 700 pounds from the previous-gen F-150's weight. Ford has yet to release fuel economy numbers—the raison d'être for the aluminum body—but promises they'll be up to 20 percent better.



Can't touch this Ford dared not inflict maddening capacitive controls on work glove-wearing F-150 drivers. Buttons and knobs operate the climate control and radio volume.

Ford has yet to release fuel economy numbers—the raison d'être for the aluminum body—but promises they'll be up to 20 percent better.

No surprise, an aluminum pickup still drives like a pickup. A notably better one, though. The steering effort is a bit light for our taste, but the steering action is quick and direct, and it commands predictable responses. When we speed through corners, the front and rear axles feel like they belong to one vehicle rather than a cab and a trailer. This is true even when we actually pull a 9,000-pound trailer. More aggressive engine braking in tow/haul mode mitigates the expletive-inspiring moment when you reach a traffic light and remember there are an extra 4.5 tons to stop.

The new F-150, with its perfect interior ergonomics, improved ride, and helpful features (ask your Ford salesman about the built-in ramps), is a much more refined tool than the one it replaces. But the truth is, it's easy to look at, sit in, and drive the F-150, shrug, and think, "Yup, it's a pickup truck." Ford, having invested five years and billions of dollars making sure a radical aluminum truck will continue to appeal to legions of conservative buyers, should consider this normalcy a victory.

—David Zenlea

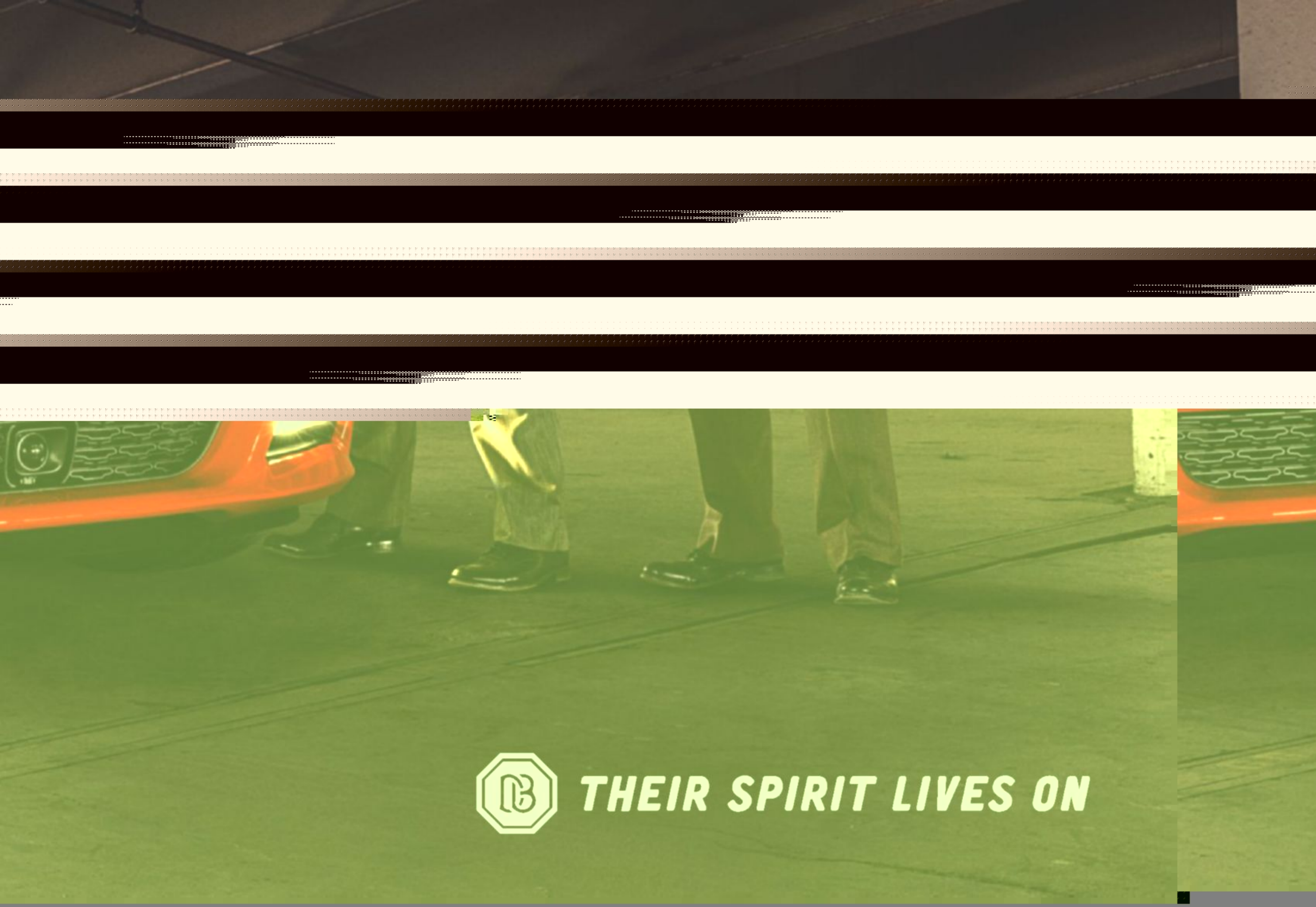
The Specs

ON SALE: Now
PRICE: $26,615-$55,980
ENGINES: 3.5-liter DOHC 24-valve V-6/283 hp, 255 lb-ft; 2.7-liter twin-turbo DOHC 24-valve V-6/325 hp, 375 lb-ft; 5.0-liter DOHC 32-valve V-8/385 hp, 387 lb-ft; 3.5-liter twin-turbo DOHC 24-valve V-6/365 hp, 420 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION: 6-speed automatic
LAYOUT: 2- or 4-door, 3-6-passenger, front-engine, RWD/4WD truck
L X W x H: 209.3-250.5 x 79.9 x 74.8-76.9 in
WHEELBASE: 122.4-163.7 in
WEIGHT: 4,050-5,142 lb

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JESSICA WALKER**

PRE-PRODUCTION MODEL SHOWN. AVAILABLE 4TH QTR 2014. DODGE IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF CHRYSLER GROUP LLC.

OUR FOUNDING
WITH THEIR GREAT-GR
GRAN
THE NEW 2015 DODGE CHARGER


THEIR SPIRIT LIVES ON

JOHN DODGE

AT DODGE.COM

2015 All-Stars

No Boring Cars: We pick this year's **10 standouts**

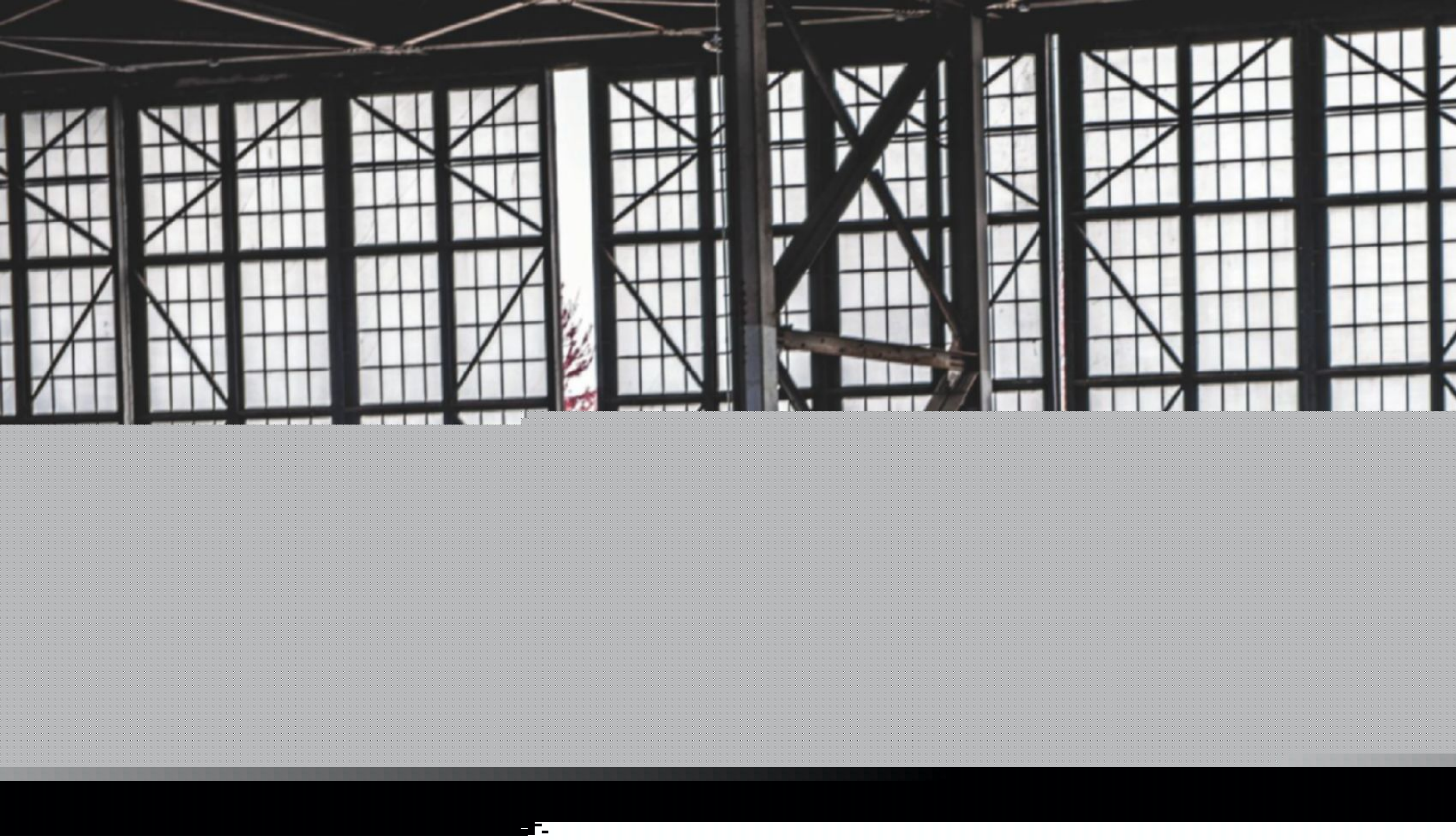
From the beginning, choosing the Automobile All-Stars has been about cutting through the hype, the noise, and the public relations BS in search of a group of cars with class, importance, and desirability. That will never change. We have tinkered with the format this year, however. From now on, All-Stars will be the only stars—they're our Automobiles of the Year. We're also now picking only from new cars. But we'll continue keeping it simple. No complicated criteria, no price caps, no categories.

We drive them. We argue about them. We choose them. Done.

CONTENDERS //

- **ACURA** TLX
- **ALFA ROMEO** 4C
- **AUDI** S3
- **BMW** i8
- **BMW** 228i
- **BMW** M235i
- **BMW** M3
- **BMW** M4
- **CADILLAC** ATS COUPE
- **CHEVROLET** CAMARO Z/28
- **CHEVROLET** SUBURBAN
- **DODGE** CHALLENGER SRT HELLCAT
- **FORD** MUSTANG
- **HONDA** FIT
- **HYUNDAI** GENESIS
- **JAGUAR** F-TYPE COUPE
- **KIA** SOUL
- **LAMBORGHINI** HURACÁN
- **LEXUS** RC F
- **MERCEDES-BENZ** C-CLASS
- **MINI** COOPER
- **PORSCHE** MACAN
- **RANGE ROVER** SPORT
- **SUBARU** WRX/WRX STI
- **VOLKSWAGEN** GOLF GTI

BY //
AUTOMOBILE STAFF
PHOTOGRAPHY BY //
ANDREW TRAHAN



Alfa Romeo 4C

Unapologetic, unfettered, unfiltered

It was only after two or three attempts to attach the data-recording VBOX antenna, and watching it slide off the roof panel, that we remembered the 2015 Alfa Romeo 4C isn't a regular car. We had to tape down the magnetic antenna, because every luscious crease and curve on this Italian road-rocket's body is made of lightweight sheet molding compound.

Such advanced materials used to be limited to six-figure exotics, but the Alfa 4C skates by with a fraction of the wallet damage and the same jaw-dropping looks. The 4C is sexy and arresting even while stationary, with a raw and untamed quality akin to the one mysterious base note in a seductive, high-class perfume.

Like so few cars in the modern era, the 4C demands your attention and focus all the time, rewarding the driver with a singularly visceral experience. Manage to shoehorn yourself over the exposed carbon-fiber door sill and into the snug cockpit, and it's readily apparent that all that separates your rump from the road are a few precious inches. If the go-kart driving position isn't intimate enough, all it takes is a look in the rearview mirror to bear witness to the 4C's 1.7-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine shimmying and shaking behind a small plexiglass plate as the turbo inhales with a thrilling *whoosh* before hurling out hellish rasps and pops that declare to the world:

2014 CHEVROLET CAMARO Z/28 //
BASE PRICE: $75,000
AS-TESTED PRICE: $75,000
ENGINE: 7.0-liter OHV 16-valve V-8/505 hp @ 6,100 rpm, 481 lb-ft @ 4,800 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 6-speed manual
LAYOUT: 2-door, 4-passenger, front-engine, RWD coupe
EPA MILEAGE (city/highway/combined): 13/19/15 mpg

Strictly stick
The Camaro Z/28 comes only with a six-speed manual transmission; no automatic is available.

Chevrolet Camaro Z/28

Its logic will escape the masses—and that's just fine with us

We'll admit, the Chevrolet Camaro Z/28 might seem completely illogical. For a $17,200 premium over the supercharged Camaro ZL1, you forfeit 75 horsepower as well as air conditioning. The wheels drop in size. Magnetic ride control, HID headlights, and the head-up display disappear. A single-speaker audio system—don't call it a stereo—replaces the ZL1's nine-speaker Boston Acoustics setup. Clearly, the shopper who walks into a dealership clutching a copy of *Consumer Reports* is not going to walk out with a Camaro Z/28.

Chevy didn't build the Z/28 for the logical buyer. Chevy built the Z/28 for hardcore car geeks. All you have to do is drive this hyper-focused Camaro on a racing circuit to see, or rather feel, why this car exists and why it's an All-Star.

The Z/28 is one of the few vehicles where the oft-heard phrase, "it drives like a street-legal race car," actually is true. Its speed and pace on the track along with its ability to shrug off abuse are phenomenal. Mega-wide, mega-sticky 305/30ZR-19 Pirelli P Zero Trofeo R tires sit at all four corners. The trick Multimatic dampers have only been used on one other road car, the $1.4 million Aston Martin One-77. Their Formula 1-style spool valves give the 3,820-pound Camaro fantastic wheel and body control, allowing the grippy Italian tires to work their magic. The extreme nature of the Z/28 continues with its "flying car mode," which came about from testing at the Nürburgring and ensures that engine power isn't cut when the car gets airborne. Giant carbon-ceramic brakes round out the buttoned-down, track-focused chassis.

For power, the Z/28 uses one of the best V-8 engines in GM's rich history, the 7.0-liter LS7 from the last-generation (C6) Corvette Z06. It's nearly 65 pounds lighter than the Camaro ZL1's LSA V-8 and plays a soundtrack from the gods. The 505-hp LS7 screams to its 7,000-rpm redline like an engine half its size and is a clear reminder why the naturally aspirated engine must never be allowed to die.

Measures great and small tell you about this car. Our favorite example of the latter: To maximize cooling air to the radiator, Chevy hollowed out the bowtie emblem in the front grill—creating, yes, the "flowtie." Ratio-swapping duties are handled via a firm yet positive, close-ratio six-speed manual. No automatic transmission is offered. This isn't a Camaro for poseurs.

Sure, the Camaro ZL1 is the better pony-car for most, but for those who understand the Z/28 and frequent a racetrack, it's a glorious gift from left field. "The Z/28 gives you the sense that there are people at General Motors who really know what makes a great driver's car," senior editor David Zenlea said. "It's a 180-degree turn from the Camaro SS that debuted in 2009." So, yes, the $75,000 Camaro Z/28 may be illogical, but it's illogical in the most wonderful way possible.

—Marc Noordeloos

Fifty years after the debut of the Ford Mustang, the all-new sixth-generation version of the original ponycar sets new standards for the segment it created back in 1964. The 2015 Mustang represents a fresh take on a formula that had grown stale, making a car that was meant to evoke carefree youth seem faintly middle-aged. Gone—finally, finally—is the solid rear axle, belatedly replaced by a fully independent suspension that soaks up bumps and road imperfections. Ford also navigated a nifty escape from the straitjacket of retro design by embracing a sleeker, more contemporary shape whose general contours and proportions still scream Mustang.

But even as the car moves boldly into the 21st century, it continues to embody all-American automotive verities such as distinctive styling, bang for the buck, and, best of all, brawny Detroit muscle. The volume sellers are bound to be models featuring a capable 300-horsepower V-6 or the more fuel-efficient EcoBoost inline-four (which actually makes 310 horsepower, thanks largely to turbocharging). But buyers who can afford it will opt for a Mustang GT, whose V-8 is now rated at 435 horsepower and 400 lb-ft of torque. Although it displaces 302 cubic inches, this isn't the 5.0-liter of yore. It's a new iteration of the all-aluminum, four-cam Coyote engine, and it's a sweet piece of work, not only generating serious speed but also making all the right noises.

Even as Ferrari has gotten out of the manual transmission business, Ford continues to offer a six-speed stick, and it's a perfect mate for the rip-roaring V-8. With the hefty shift lever and robust shift motion, the gearbox seems to have come out of an old-school Woodward Avenue street racer. Still, there's nothing archaic about the Mustang when it's roaring through the twisties or carving around a road course. Sure, it's easy—and fun—to induce power oversteer coming out of slow corners. But the chassis is remarkably well composed when driven briskly, and the brakes are a revelation, with a high, hard pedal and more stopping power than you'd expect in a car that weighs more than 3,700 pounds.

Mustang muscle
The six-speed manual is a perfect mate to the rip-roaring V-8. The interior is also much improved.

Make no mistake: The Mustang isn't a small car, and it feels even bigger because of the seating position and long hood. Still, the interior is so much better than the cockpit of the outgoing car that it's easy to overlook the plastic trim and hokey touches such as a "Since 1964" plaque and a "Ground Speed" legend in the speedometer. Finally, the interior feels appropriate for a car that real grown-ups buy for more than $40,000 with options. (Technically, an entry-level V-6 starts at $24,425, while a GT can be had for as little as $32,925.)

Yes, the Mustang has come a long way from the bare-bones coupe bought by secretaries for a mere $2,368 back in 1964. But five decades later, America's first and foremost ponycar is still a deal any horse trader would love.

—Preston Lerner

2015 FORD MUSTANG //
BASE PRICE: $24,425-$43,620
AS-TESTED PRICE: $45,885
ENGINES: 3.7-liter DOHC 24-valve V-6/300 hp @ 6,500 rpm, 280 lb-ft @ 4,000 rpm; 2.3-liter turbocharged DOHC 16-valve I-4/310 hp @ 5,500 rpm, 320 lb-ft @ 3,000 rpm; 5.0-liter DOHC 32-valve V-8/435 hp @ 6,500 rpm, 400 lb-ft @ 4,250 rpm
TRANSMISSIONS: 6-speed manual, 6-speed automatic
LAYOUT: 2-door, 4-passenger, front-engine, RWD coupe/convertible
EPA MILEAGE (city/highway/combined): 15-22/25-31/19-26 mpg (manual), 16-21/25-32/ 19-25 mpg (automatic)

2015 LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN //
BASE PRICE: $242,445
AS-TESTED PRICE: $279,345
ENGINE: 5.2-liter DOHC 40-valve V-10 / 610 hp @ 8,250 rpm, 413 lb-ft @ 6,500 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 7-speed automatic
LAYOUT: 2-door, 2-passenger, mid-engine, AWD coupe
EPA MILEAGE (city/highway/combined): 14/20/16 mpg

The joy of hex The Huracán's interior is surprisingly spacious.

Shakespeare's Prospero could have been thinking of a mid-engine Lamborghini, instead of the duplicitous Caliban, when he said, "A devil, a born devil on whose nature nurture can never stick." That was in "The Tempest." In the here and now, the 2015 Huracán, unlike previous Lamborghinis, has no devilry. Rather, despite the sinister, squinting eyes and sneering lips, it has benevolent might and much of Prospero's magic. Refined and civilized, it's a breakthrough Lamborghini and an *Automobile Magazine* All-Star.

Introduced last spring at the Geneva Motor Show, the crucially important Huracán was said to herald a new era. Yes, with the 5.2-liter, DOHC 40-valve V-10 now generating 610 hp, the car would be ferociously fast. But the key could be found in making it easy to drive daily. Although 14,022 units of its Gallardo predecessor were produced between 2003 and 2013, that mid-engine two-seater was somewhat taxing. Decisive mediation has come from the new seven-speed, dual-clutch automatic transmission, the Lamborghini Doppia Frizione. The old car, when equipped with an automated manual, changed gears with slam-bang eventfulness, while the Huracán seems to mesh its cogs instantly in a pool of gravy. It's as if the short assembly line in Sant'Agata includes a final station where each Huracán nibbles on a Lexus.

As expected, the supercar is formidable on the track. Like the sticker price of

Keeping it classy The WRX's more-refined interior boasts superb primary controls and visibility. At left, the All-Stars voting goes down better with some wine.

Subaru WRX/WRX STI

It's not too soon to call it an automotive icon

It's hard to believe that Subaru has only sold the WRX in the States for a little more than a decade. This scrappy sport compact has achieved icon status more quickly than any other car in recent memory, and the latest iteration makes it easy to see why.

With gold wheels, blue paint, and a huge rear wing, the new WRX STI Launch Edition won't be mistaken for anything other than a Rex. The formula is the same as ever: Turbocharge the Impreza to within an inch of its life, add a wing and some torque vectoring, and, voilà, you've got the STI, a rally car with a license plate and air conditioning.

After five minutes behind the wheel of the uncompromised, raucous WRX STI, we're already coming up with excuses to take it ice racing or to find a snow-packed country road and slide it all winter long. The more you abuse it, the better it gets. We're laughing out loud as the boost builds and all four wheels claw at the ground, the whole car begging you to shift harder, to turn in quicker, to brake later.

All of this could be said about past STIs but, as senior editor David Zenlea noted, "What's changed is that the controls now live up to the handling." Remember how Honda built cars in the 1980s and 1990s, with clear sightlines, no-nonsense controls, and organic seating positions? Subaru has taken up that torch lately, and it makes as much of a difference in a performance car as it does in a mainstream compact. Visibility is sensational thanks to '90s-era thin A-pillars, and the flat-bottom steering wheel and engaging short-throw shifter feel just right whether you're at the limit or puttering around town.

We had a riot tailing exotic cars on the track in the STI. Then we looked at the sticker price: $35,000 for this monster-level performance? Sign us up. If you can't swing that figure, the cheaper standard WRX has also grown up with this redesign, and it's no longer the playful Labrador puppy to the STI's slightly terrifying adult Doberman. Getting 268 horsepower for $27,000 is nothing to sneeze at, and even the base car now has torque vectoring and six speeds for its manual transmission. (The WRX also can be had with a new CVT automatic that, we freely admit, is not terrible.)

Subaru may not be the only company that *can* build a domesticated rally car like this, but with the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo's demise, it's the only one that still does. Most automakers have steered away from unconventional sports cars in favor of consumer-friendly boxes. Indeed, even Subaru's recent success depends on hot-selling mainstream crossovers with CVT automatics.

We're happy to see Subaru sell all the Outbacks and Foresters it can build if it means we still get the WRX and WRX STI. The redesigned 2015 versions are more than up to the task of being the last bastions of affordable all-wheel-drive performance at the Pleiades brand—and icons for the whole industry. *—Joey Capparella*

2015 SUBARU WRX/WRX STI //
BASE PRICE: $27,090-$39,290
AS-TESTED PRICE: $38,190
ENGINES: 2.0-liter turbocharged DOHC 16-valve flat-4/268 hp @ 5,600 rpm, 258 lb-ft @ 2,000-5,000 rpm; 2.5-liter turbocharged DOHC 16-valve flat-4/305 hp @ 6,000 rpm, 290 lb-ft @ 4,000 rpm
TRANSMISSIONS: 6-speed manual, CVT (WRX only)
LAYOUT: 4-door, 5-passenger, front-engine, AWD sedan
EPA MILEAGE (city/highway/combined): 17-21/23-28/19-24 mpg (manual), 19/25/21 mpg (CVT)

Man of the Year

Peter Mullin

The visionary collector and philanthropist pushes to advance automotive design

BY **RONALD AHRENS** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BARRY J. HOLMES**

Slightly late for a photo session, Peter Mullin pulls up in the unique Mini Cooper S he drives around Los Angeles. It's the medium green of an Aston Martin DB4 and carries that marque's winged emblem on the nose. License plates bear the coined name Vanquet. Mullin's wife, Merle, had encouraged him to buy an Aston, but instead of a Vanquish, he said, "I'll just do this and save a couple hundred thousand for a Bugatti."

The photo session is on the rooftop garden of one of Art Center College of Design's south campus buildings in Pasadena. The school's transportation programs disperse about 50 graduates each year throughout the industry. Notable alumni are Franz von Holzhausen of Tesla and Miguel Galluzzi of Piaggio's Advanced Design Center, nearby on Colorado Boulevard. With students moving beyond scale models to full-size prototypes, TransDesign has crowded out Illustration, Fine Art, and other programs from the main hillside campus. Mullin, the 73-year-old grandfather of 12, donated $15 million—the largest gift in Art Center's history—for the purchase of another south campus building. President Lorne Buchman describes the gift as "transformative" and says it not only helps to ease the space crunch but also "takes philanthropy to a new level."

In enthusiast circles, Mullin, who built his fortune in the insurance industry, is most renowned for his discriminating collection of French cars. Can't make it to the Mullin Automotive Museum, in coastal Oxnard, for "The Art of Bugatti" to see what he calls "the genius artistry of that whole family"? (The exhibit runs through March.) The museum's new website allows virtual visits; as it develops, additional features will let you design a car, paint it, and eventually print it through rapid prototyping for display on your own desk. "The technology today allows you to virtually be there with a fly-through of the whole museum," he says after the photo shoot. "It's insane not to use it to enhance the visitor's experience, whether they're (there) in person or online."

What's developed in Oxnard will soon extend to the Petersen Automotive Museum, on L.A.'s Wilshire Boulevard. The Petersen closed in October for a remodeling and "reiteration" that Mullin, who pushed for change as board chairman, expects will place it among the top three car museums anywhere. Doing away with quaint dioramas, the new Petersen will feature cars as art and emphasize L.A. car culture. To acquaint patrons with the intricacies of automotive design, the museum will include a real-time studio staffed by Art Center students, strengthening the nexus between institutions. Meanwhile, some of his own cars will be displayed in a gallery at the school's new building.

Not a bad year for Mullin. Attending boat races at Long Beach Marine Stadium as a boy, he listened to his father, a chemical engineer for Mobil, discourse about oil viscosity and the coefficient of friction. "I was more interested in speed and design and results," he says.

Here's our result: Man of the Year. **AM**

Design *of the Year*

Mercedes-Benz S-Class Coupe

A distinguished distillation of all they know in Stuttgart

BY **ROBERT CUMBERFORD**

Technology *of the Year*

BMW Project i

Carbon-fiber-reinforced plastic

BY **TODD LASSA** AND **GEORG KACHER**

BMW turns a lightweight material from Formula 1 into a mass-market production reality—with huge implications for the future of the automobile

We have seen (and driven) the future of the sports car, and it is the BMW i8. The halo car for BMW's Project i melds the brand's sporty dynamics and premium refinement with plug-in-hybrid efficiency.

Carbon-fiber-reinforced plastic (CFRP), more commonly known as carbon fiber, is key. Used in Formula 1 since the early 1980s, the strong, lightweight material makes it possible to combine sporty dynamics and premium refinement with dramatically reduced carbon-dioxide emissions. Partner SGL Group of Wiesbaden, Germany, makes the material for the body shells of the i3 and i8 at its carbon-fiber plant in Moses Lake, Washington. In the coming years, BMW's Project i will add a range of models between those numbers, project chief Ulrich Kranz says.

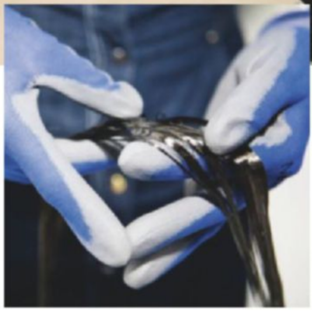
"Lightweight design is a key technology in the quest for reduced fuel consumption and CO2 emissions," Kranz tells us. "Lightweight design is also particularly critical in the BMW i3 because of its key role in determining what size of battery will be required and what mileage range can be achieved. It is the combination of SGL's advanced carbon fibers and BMW's unrivaled know-how in mass production of the CFRP components that will allow us to produce carbon-fiber components at competitive costs to alternative materials."

The cost of carbon fiber is partially offset by the benefits of its low mass, which allows Project i to downsize "very expensive" battery systems, Kranz adds.

"For the same function, CFRP is about 30 percent lighter than aluminum and 50 percent lighter than steel. Used in the right places, this material reduces weight, optimizes the vehicle's center of gravity, and improves body strength."

About half the BMW i3s sold to date (both globally and in the U.S.) have the optional range-extending 0.6-liter two-cylinder gas engine, Kranz reports. So equipped, the 3,130-pound i3 has a 117 mpge/39 mpg (gas only) combined rating and a 150-mile total range (81 miles for the EV-only

'Unrivaled know-how' BMW has mastered mass production of carbon-fiber-reinforced plastic components, allowing for lightweight body shells of the i3 and i8.



> *"CFRP is about 30 percent lighter than aluminum and 50 percent lighter than steel. Used in the right places, this material reduces weight, optimizes the vehicle's center of gravity, and improves body strength."*

model), and it's 122 pounds lighter than the electric-only Honda Fit EV. Meanwhile, the electric-only BMW i3 weighs 2,860 pounds.

But it's the sleek, sinewy 3,455-pound BMW i8 that exemplifies the Munich brand's dynamic automotive artwork. Powered by the Mini Cooper's turbocharged three-cylinder engine, pumped up to 228 hp and 236 lb-ft, and a 129-hp synchronous electric motor, this 2+2 coupe gets to 60 mph in 4.2 seconds and reaches a top speed of 155 mph. At the same time, BMW's exotic sports car has an EPA fuel-economy rating of 76 mpge/28 mpg (gas only) combined and delivers a cruising range of 330 miles.

When the BMW i project began, CEO Norbert Reithofer paid up front for BMW's 50/50 investment in the Moses Lake plant to keep Project i unburdened by the fixed capital costs. "If everything continues to go according to plan, we will earn a reasonable margin per vehicle and make money on every car," Kranz says about the investment. "We don't build vehicles that are not profitable." This is quite a statement when you consider that the BMW i3 starts at $42,300 before any tax incentives.

Moses Lake was also chosen for its ability to meet an acceptable standard of sustainability. Carbon-fiber production is energy-intensive, and the factory gets its electricity from a hydroelectric dam on the nearby Columbia River. BMW and SGL developed shorter production times and lowered baking temperatures to produce the carbon fiber, though they won't detail how they achieved these cost-reducing methods.

The joint venture already has doubled Moses Lake's initial annual production of carbon fiber to 6,000 tons and is in the process of increasing it again to 9,000 tons per year. BMW plans to produce 27,500 units of the i3 and 10,000 units of the i8 in 2015, and will add an i5 model shortly after.

BMW believes the cost of carbon fiber could ultimately drop by 90 percent, well within the ballpark of steel. Aluminum may be the new lightweight miracle material for full-size pickups, but for cars—and especially sports cars—carbon fiber is the future. **AM**

ROAD HAZARD PROTECTION
Now Included With Most Tires

TIRE RACK.com

MasterCard VISA DISCOVER PayPal WESTERN UNION

WINTER TIRES

Functional Footwear. For Your Vehicle.

FIND THE RIGHT WINTER TIRE

FOR THE CONDITIONS YOU DRIVE IN

Call one of our sales specialists or shop by vehicle at www.tirerack.com/winter

Select Make

Select Year

BRIDGESTONE Continental DUNLOP Firestone GENERAL TIRE
GOODYEAR MICHELIN PIRELLI YOKOHAMA

READY-TO-BOLT-ON WINTER PACKAGES!

Tire Rack's Winter Tire & Wheel Packages make changing to winter tires easy and efficient. These high quality, vehicle-specific fitments arrive ready to bolt on your vehicle.

Packages include free scratchless mounting and free Hunter Road Force™ balancing. Plus, all necessary hardware is included at no additional cost!

SAMPLE PACKAGES

Build Your Own at www.tirerack.com/snow

'15 Ford Focus ST
215/50R-17 Bridgestone Blizzak WS80^{XL}
17x7.5 Sport Edition CS1

'15 Mazda6 Grand Touring
215/65R-16 Pirelli Winter Sottozero 3
16x6.5 New Steel Wheels w/Covers

'15 BMW 535d Sedan
225/55R-17 Bridgestone Blizzak LM-32^{RFT}
17x8 Rial Salerno

'15 Jeep Cherokee FWD
225/60R-17 Goodyear Ultra Grip Ice WRT
17x7.5 Platinum Marathon

WHAT ABOUT TPMS?

If your vehicle is equipped with a direct tire pressure monitoring system, we can recommend wheels that are compatible with its sensors. An extra set of sensors is also available for most systems, and can arrive pre-installed on your package!

©2014
Tire Rack

Hours EST: M-F 8am-8pm
SAT 9am-4pm

1-888-374-8473

www.tirerack.com

Performance Winter / Snow

Available for sport cars, coupes and sedans to deliver winter performance for drivers whose enthusiasm doesn't cool off when temperatures drop. Designed to be effective in freezing and near freezing temperatures by offering significantly more traction than

or snowy conditions.

Interactive Brickwork Siping
increases both lateral and longitudinal stability while providing more biting edges to increase snow traction.

58 sizes available from 16"-20"

Performance Winter / Snow

For premium and prestigious high-performance vehicles that will face challenging wintertime road conditions. Developed with the philosophy that winter / snow tires must perform in a variety of unpredictable weather conditions, Winter Sottozero 3 tires are designed not just as snow tires, but as seasonal tires suitable for the wintertime's cold weather and freezing road conditions.

29 sizes available from 16"-21"

Pirelli Winter Runflat Sizes In Stock!

Studdable Winter / Snow

For sport cars, coupes, sedans, minivans, CUVs and SUVs. A directional tread design with rounded shoulders increases hydroplaning resistance on wet and slush-covered roads while enhancing dry road handling. High density sipes across the face of the tire enhance snow starting and stopping traction while optional metal studs in the shoulder and intermediate tread blocks increase traction on packed snow and icy roads.

45 sizes available from 14"-21"

www.tirerack.com/pirelli

39 sizes available from 16"-22"

Gainesville, Georgia

The supercharged V-8 motivating the brand-new, bad-to-the-bone 2015 Chevrolet Corvette Z06 makes 650 howling horsepower, and Tommy Milner is letting every last pony run free as he keeps the throttle on the floor while cresting the hill on the back straight at Road Atlanta.

From my vantage point in the right seat, I see 154 mph flashing on the speedometer as Turn 10A approaches, and a trip into the gravel trap looming ahead of us appears to be inevitable. At the 150-foot marker, Milner buries the pedal for the carbon-ceramic brakes, and the 'Vette bleeds off speed like a fighter jet after making a carrier landing. "I think this thing brakes better than the race car," he murmurs.

But there's no time to marvel at the stopping power of the Z06. With its rear end dancing, Milner snakes the car through the tight left- and right-handers before the bridge then hurtles down the steep hill toward the scary-fast sweeper leading onto the front straight. I'm expecting him to breathe the throttle to get the Z06's front end to bite. Instead, he keeps his foot in it and, much to my amazement, I feel the extra speed generating aerodynamic downforce that squashes the car to the pavement. "It's unbelievable the amount of grip this car develops," Milner says as he flashes past the start-finish line.

Mind you, Milner isn't a Corvette fanboy contributing annoying comments to an online track-day forum. He's a factory driver for Corvette Racing, the factory-supported team fielded by Pratt & Miller Engineering that ran cars built directly on the Z06 platform in the 2014 Tudor United SportsCar Championship. Three days ago, Milner finished fourth in the GTLM class in the 10-hour Petit Le Mans here at Road Atlanta while racing against other factory-supported teams for the BMW Z4, Dodge Viper, Ferrari 458, and Porsche 911.

There are stretches of Road Atlanta, in fact, where the 2015 Z06 is virtually as quick as the redoubtable C7.R race car that's been campaigned not only here at this track but everywhere from Daytona to Le Mans. "In a fast corner, it's easy to ask too much of a car and oversaturate the tires, and you get understeer or oversteer," Milner says as we finally roll slowly into the pits after a cooldown lap. "But with the Z06, the downforce gives you so much grip that you're starting to blur the distinction between a street car and a race car. Honestly, I've driven race cars that aren't as impressive as this thing."

Corvettes have gone through good times and bad over the past six decades. Some models have been enshrined as legends while others are best forgotten. But ever

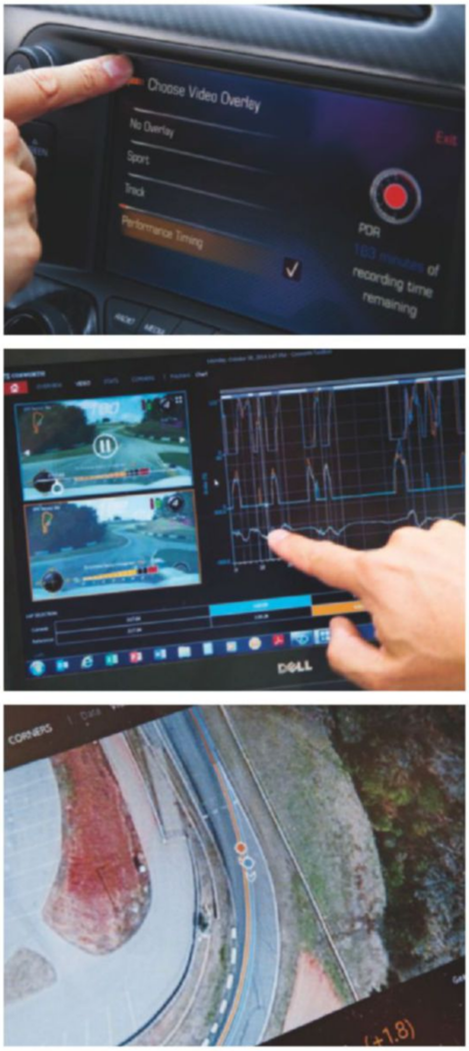
Hot shoe
Corvette Racing's Tommy Milner drove the Z06 at Road Atlanta two days after racing the C7.R at the same track.

"IT'S UNBELIEVABLE THE AMOUNT OF GRIP THIS CAR DEVELOPS"

instantaneously from fully open to fully locked, the Z06 accommodates a wide range of stability and traction control settings. Using a rotary dial in the center console, I cycle through Weather, Eco, Tour, Sport, and Track modes. Double-clicking on Track puts me into the Performance Traction Management menu. Here, I dial up the midrange Sport 1 setting to warm up the tires. Welcome to the electronics of the modern high-speed automobile.

When I reach pit-out and get onto the track and lay into the throttle, my first surprise is the sound of the engine: minimal supercharger whine but seriously loud and much sharper than the C7 Stingray. (Sweeter, too, than the C7.R race car, which emits a deeper, truck-like note.) Acceleration is fierce but not brutal, and I'm seeing 150 mph on the head-up display in no time. Then comes Revelation No. 2. The initial hit of the Z07-spec ceramic brakes sends me hard against my suddenly taut shoulder harness, and more pedal pressure slows the car even more dramatically through the brake zone. This is great.

When I sink my foot into the throttle, I feel the electronic nannies working a bit too fussily for my taste, so I switch to Sport 2 mode, which maintains the same traction-control target as Sport 1 but deletes stability control. With the Z07 aero package, the car makes so much downforce that I never test the limits in the fast corners or riding the curbs through the esses. I'm able to take a few liberties in the slower



Hit record The performance data recorder (left) allows Z06 owners to analyze what they're doing on the racetrack or on challenging roads such as Tail of the Dragon.

2015 CHEVROLET CORVETTE Z06 WITH Z07 OPTION

PRICE: $78,995 (base); $89,985 (as tested)
ENGINE: 6.2-liter, supercharged OHV 16-valve V-8/ 650 hp @ 6,400 rpm, 650 lb-ft @ 3,600 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 7-speed manual
LAYOUT: 2-door, 2-passenger, front-engine, RWD coupe
FUEL MILEAGE (city/ highway): 15/25 mpg (est)
SUSPENSION F/R: Control arms, leaf spring/ control arms, leaf spring
BRAKES: Carbon-ceramic vented discs, carbon-ceramic rotors
TIRES F/R: P285/30ZR-19/ P335/25ZR-20 Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2
L x W x H: 176.9 x 77.1 x 48.6 in
WHEELBASE: 106.7 in
WEIGHT: 3,524 lb
WEIGHT DIST. F/R: 50/50%
0-60 MPH: 3.0 sec (mfr est)
¼ MILE: 10.95 sec @ 127 mph (mfr est)

> IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO GO FROM CLARK KENT TO SUPERMAN—A SECLUDED STRETCH OF OPEN ROAD, A SIGN ALERTING YOU TO TWISTIES AHEAD, WHATEVER.

sections, but even here, this Corvette feels so well-planted that I have no reservations about switching to Race mode, which minimizes electronic intrusions.

Now, I experience my third and most memorable epiphany. Unlike the ZR1, the 2015 Z06 isn't a car that intimidates drivers. On the contrary, it's a car that inspires confidence. This is the Corvette of more—more power, more grip, more brakes, more downforce. Sure, you have to be a Tommy Milner to unlock all of its potential. But even leaving a substantial margin for error, the car is capable enough to allow the rest of us to feel like heroes.

Corvette engineers insist that the Z06's eight-speed automatic—no dual-clutch wizardry here, just a conventional torque converter—produces the fastest lap times, even without working the shift paddles on the steering wheel. I have more fun rowing the seven-speed manual in this Z07-spec car, although I reluctantly find myself using the automatic rev-matching feature because it's so foolproof that it seems pigheaded not to.

Another sweet touch is the very cool performance data recorder, which incorporates a tiny camera mounted above the rearview mirror to record high-definition video while a GPS unit generates a track map. Using software developed by Cosworth, 20 streams of data—everything from vehicle speed to brake pressure—can be synced to the video. This is the kind of stuff pros use to find tenths of a second in lap time on a racetrack, and it ought to be a huge hit within the Corvette community as both instruction and entertainment. "I think people are going to do things with it that we never thought of," says Corvette project manager Harlan Charles, who came up with the idea for the system after playing the "Gran Turismo" video game.

On the speed-limited roads of the real world, the 2015 Chevrolet Corvette Z06 trades beast-like performance for a more subdued, domesticated persona. Just loping along, it feels almost indistinguishable from the C7 Stingray, and it will happily deactivate four cylinders for a bump in fuel economy. But it doesn't take much to go from Clark Kent to Superman—a secluded stretch of open road, a sign alerting you to twisties ahead, whatever. Suddenly, your foot is deep in the throttle, and your speed is climbing so rapidly that the digital readout can't keep up. Now, all you've got to do is dial up Race mode to let your inner Tommy Milner loose. **AM**

Mercedes-AMG GT S versus **Porsche 911 GTS**

Germany's newest sports car and its most iconic meet in the Austrian Alps

WORLD EXCLUSIVE—**AMG GT S** VS. **911 GTS**

The New Rivalry

BY **GEORG KACHER** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TOM SALT**

S GO 4025
GTS

Silvretta Alps, Austria

Same orbit, new orbiter.

The dark blue 2016 Mercedes-AMG GT S, unleashed here for the very first time, is the baddest Benz ever made, even meaner than last year's SLS Black Series and more awesome than the mega-expensive yet underwhelming McLaren-engineered SLR. But the 503-hp AMG GT S, which arrives in dealerships early next year, is not satisfied with merely beating its corporate forebears. It wants to club the competition. That's why, for this exclusive drive of the AMG GT S, we've brought along a Guards Red Porsche 911 in its new GTS trim.

AMG's newest creation announces itself loud and clear. Its angry part-throttle exhaust rumble makes heads swivel, its full-throttle low-gear acceleration borders on indecent behavior, its hard cornering inevitably produces some serious tire squeal, and the flat-out roar is bound to reach your ears long before the car comes

Bold and brash
The Mercedes-AMG GT S is smoother and subtler than the old SLS, but it's still wild looking, both inside and out.

AMG
S GT 1161

Our brilliant blue Mercedes is virtually invincible on the fastest stretches of this panoramic spiral staircase. Once the turns get faster, the Mercedes licks up the road.

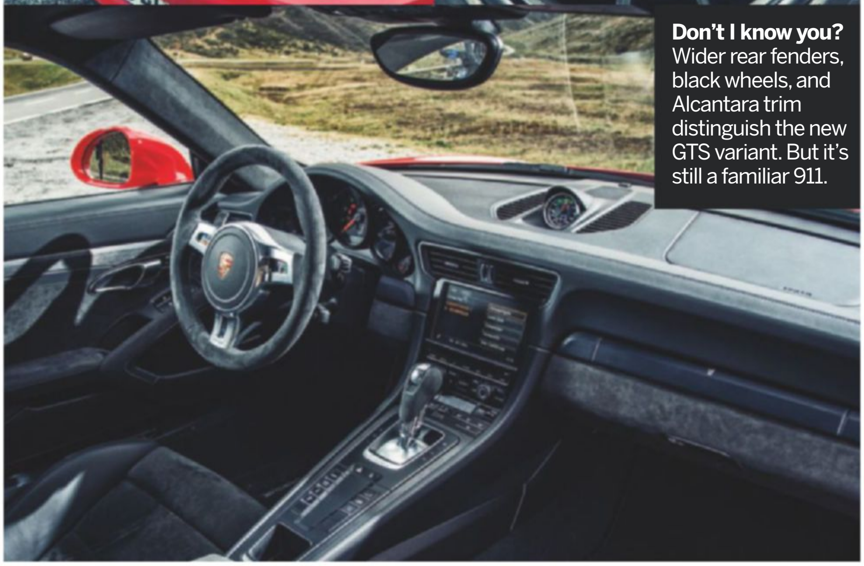
High-tech hammer The GT S has 21st-century lighting and chassis electronics, but its long-nose proportions recall classic sports cars.

into sight. You call up these extroverted antics from an imposing cabin that is largely inherited from the SLS. The passenger cell is short and wide, rear three-quarter visibility is compromised, and the driving position is defined by the towering instrument panel, wide transmission tunnel, and too-close-for-comfort rear firewall. The AMG's imposing environment is garnished with a battery of large air vents; a high-definition in-dash color monitor; a pricey blend of optional soft leathers and matte carbon-fiber inlays; a center stack loaded with buttons, knobs, switches; and a stubby joystick gear selector. It's a stage set for stardom, but it falls short in terms of legroom, airiness (even with the optional panorama roof), outward visibility, and ergonomic clarity.

To the uneducated, the 911 GTS is just another Nine-Eleven. In reality, however, the latest wide-body iteration wants to be the sportiest model this side of the halo specials. It comes with unique black 20-inch wheels, blacked-out bi-xenon headlamps, selected aero kit elements, low-drag mirrors, a custom rear apron, four black tailpipes, and two lines of solid black badging on the bumper below the adjustable tail rudder. Our test car has rear-wheel drive to match the AMG

2016 MERCEDES-AMG GT S //
BASE PRICE: $130,000 (est)
ENGINE: 4.0-liter DOHC 32-valve V-8, 503 hp @ 6,000 rpm, 479 lb-ft @ 1,750-5,000 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 7-speed dual-clutch automatic
LAYOUT: 2-door, 2-passenger, front-engine, RWD hatchback
L x W x H: 179.8 x 76.3 x 50.2 in
WHEELBASE: 103.5 in
WEIGHT: 3,450 lb (est)
FUEL MILEAGE: (city/highway): 16/23 mpg (est)

PORSCHE
911 Carrera GTS



Don't I know you? Wider rear fenders, black wheels, and Alcantara trim distinguish the new GTS variant. But it's still a familiar 911.

With stability control in handling mode, our brilliant blue Mercedes is virtually invincible on the fastest stretches of this panoramic spiral staircase. Once the turns get faster, the Mercedes licks up the road. The 47/53 percent front/rear weight distribution, the electronic diff lock, suction-cup-like Pirellis, low center of gravity, and aluminum double-wishbone suspension make this car feel agile, involving, inspiring. You really want to be in Sport Plus on demanding turf like this for its firm and meaty steering, lightning-quick gear changes, and hair-trigger throttle mapping.

The Porsche cannot pull off quite as many electronic tricks. Furthermore, the 911 commands a surcharge for goodies such as variable-effort steering, sport suspension, and dynamic chassis control. Carbon-ceramic brakes cost extra whether you shop at Porsche or Mercedes. You also pay up for the dual-clutch transmission, but Porsche has a shift-it-yourself option Mercedes doesn't. While the 911 runs on wider footwear than the Mercedes, it actually rides better on these lumpy off-camber twisties with their crumbling shoulders and ancient repair patches. The Porsche also turns in with even more vigor, and the front sticks all the way through the corner. At the same time, the rear end carves around in g-force-defying fashion until stability control eventually steps in.

Who would have thought that the AMG would be less composed overall than its rear-engine rival? The chassis of the Mercedes could do with more compliance. When you're really flying up the hill, vertical body movements occasionally throw off the handling balance, requiring ultra-quick action at the wheel. This comes as a bit of a surprise because, like the Porsche, it rarely leaves you in doubt as to its riveting road holding and the inherently fail-safe handling. But since there is no engine sitting on top of its driven wheels, breakaway is easily induced at lower cornering speeds.

At the dawn of a new era devoted to downsizing, hybridization, and electromobility, V-8s will soon be condemned as fossils from a wasteful past—so get one like the charismatic, turbocharged direct-injection, dry-sump 32-valve 3,982cc unit that is the essence of the AMG GT S while you can. A similar hymn of praise can be sung of the flat-six in the 911. The 3,800cc engine, connected to the throttle pedal via a live wire, makes all the right noises and begs

The Porsche is an emotional masterpiece. It combines the physique of the Carrera S with the heart of the GT3.

2015 PORSCHE 911 GTS //
BASE PRICE: $115,195
ENGINE: 3.8-liter DOHC 24-valve flat-6, 430 hp @ 7,500 rpm, 325 lb-ft @ 5,750 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 7-speed dual-clutch automatic
LAYOUT: 2-door, 4-passenger, rear-engine RWD coupe
L x W x H: 177.5 x 72.9 x 51.0 in
WHEELBASE: 96.5 in
WEIGHT: 3,186 lb
FUEL ECONOMY (city/highway): 18/26 mpg (est)

to be revved hard. When the updated 911 enters the scene late next year, turbos will be mandatory. For fans of naturally aspirated, high-strung 911s, it's now or never unless your budget stretches to the GT3.

Before we wrap up, the red 911 and the blue GT S trumpet down the hill in a loose convoy one more time, landing at the bottom of the valley with crackling exhausts and sizzling brakes. What's the verdict? The Porsche is an emotional masterpiece. It combines the physique of the Carrera S with the heart of the GT3. It has lovely steering, impeccable brakes, a chassis engineered for an amazing ride-handling balance, and a quick-shifting transmission. Oh, and it has an engine that howls enchantingly, performs well, and revs to the moon. In this particular company, however, it could do with a bit more power. It also needs to offer the driver more control of its sophisticated electronics rather than grouping them in take-it-or-leave-it Sport and Sport-Plus modes.

The Mercedes-AMG GT S is a compelling autobahn stormer. The transmission is intuitive, the brakes perform with the finality of a guillotine, and the engine develops an incredible physical thrust. About 250 pounds heavier than the Porsche, the GT S is more lavishly equipped and oozes presence. But the big coupe needs space to shine. That's space as in wide roads, flowing curves, third- and fourth-gear sweepers, and smooth surfaces. Its main weaknesses are the compromised packaging and the debatable suspension tuning, which should be calmer at high speed and better buttoned-down on bumpy roads. In consideration of these flaws, the 911 is the purer, more focused, and ultimately more dynamic choice. The new Mercedes-AMG is neither the perfect GT nor the perfect sports car, but it straddles the two categories with addictive appeal and ability. **AM**

2014
Jeep Cherokee Limited
Born into controversy

The Specs

PRICE: $36,430
ENGINE: 3.2-liter DOHC 24-valve V-6/271 hp @ 6,500 rpm, 239 lb-ft @ 4,400 rpm
TRANSMISSION: 9-speed automatic
LAYOUT: 4-door, 5-passenger, front-engine, 4WD SUV
EPA MILEAGE (city/highway/combined): 19/26/21 mpg
L x W x H: 182.0 x 73.2 x 67.3 in
WHEELBASE: 106.3 in
WEIGHT: 4,044 lb

Of all the many Jeeps that have worn the Cherokee name, none has faced more controversy upon its debut than the latest Cherokee. Called out for its car-based architecture and its radical styling, the new Cherokee—which steps in for the much more conventional Liberty—has faced criticism. And yet, the new Jeep has been a hit in the marketplace, driving the brand's sales to new heights.

Given all the hubbub and the Cherokee's importance to Jeep, a Four Seasons test was in order. Deciding on our car's spec wasn't easy, with so many varieties of Cherokee. Four-wheel drive was a must, and we knew we wanted the optional 3.2-liter V-6 rather than the standard 2.4-liter four-cylinder, which is marginal in this application. That knocked out the Sport (base) trim level. We also eliminated the off-road-themed Trailhawk because, like most Cherokee buyers, we'd likely be spending all of our time on pavement. Choosing between the Latitude and the Limited was more of a toss-up, but we finally went for the fancier Limited so we could try out all the active safety features, which are not available on the Latitude.

Those items include blind-spot warning, rear cross-path detection, forward-collision warning, and lane-departure warning, all part of the $2,155 technology package, along with active parking assist (parallel and perpendicular), adaptive cruise control, rain-sensing wipers, advanced brake assist, and automatic high beams. For $795, we added navigation to the Uconnect system. Add $1,495 for the V-6 and $995 for four-wheel drive, and our Limited's base price of $30,990 (with destination) had grown to $36,430.

That's steep for a compact SUV but not for a loaded-up midsize SUV, and the Cherokee straddles both categories. Throughout the year, we'll debate whether the new Cherokee moves the nameplate forward in a more modern direction, or whether it's an off note for a brand steeped in heritage.

—Joe Lorio

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW TRAHAN

2.0L Turbo & 2.5L Engine

COOLER, CONDUCIVE, QUICKER

Direct Injection helps reduce cold-start emissions and allows for a higher compression ratio. Direct Injection helps cool the overall intake process, allowing for higher boost from the ECOTEC 2.0-liter engine's turbocharger.

COLD-START EMISSIONS

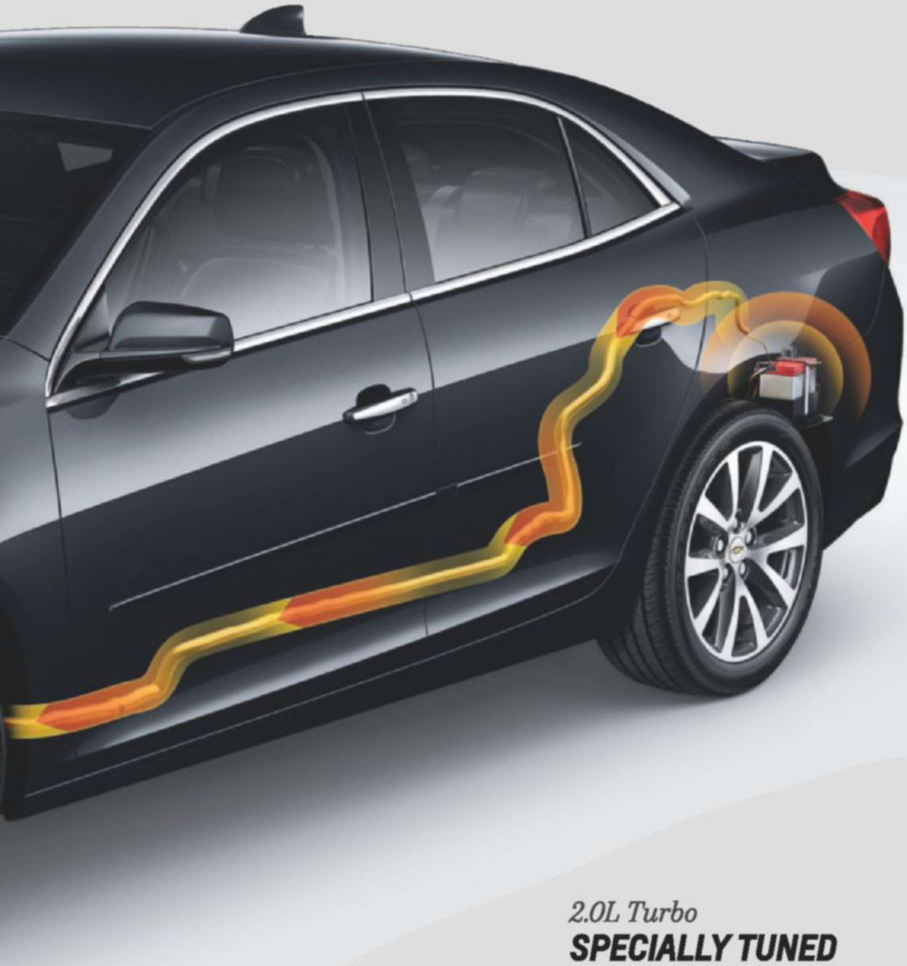
2.5L Engine

SEAMLESS OPERATION

Intake Valve Lift Control technology enables variable intake valve lift, duration and timing over a wide range of engine operation. "Intake Valve Lift Control works so seamlessly, drivers aren't likely to notice it at all," said Mike Katerberg, Chevrolet global chief engineer for ECOTEC engines. "What they will notice is a fuel savings of up to one mile per gallon, offering an EPA-estimated 25 city/36 highway."

25 MPG CITY | **36** MPG HWY

Intelligent stop/start technology, Intake Valve Lift Control and a 6T45 transmission all contribute to the 2.5-liter's EPA-estimated fuel economy.



2.5L Engine

INTELLIGENT STOP/START TECHNOLOGY

Under certain conditions, the engine turns off at a stop and seamlessly starts again as soon as you lift your foot off the brake. The intelligent stop/start technology — along with other advancements such as Direct Injection and Variable Valve Timing — can increase city mileage by more than 10 percent for an EPA-estimated 25 MPG city. The stop/start technology uses a reinforced Absorbent Glass Mat (AGM) starting battery. There's a beefed-up tandem-solenoid starter motor and even an auxiliary battery located in the rear of the car — plus an electric hydraulic pump keeps fluid circulating through the transmission to make sure it's always pressured and primed.

ENGINE ENGAGED

As soon as the brake is released, the engine engages, virtually in an instant.

2.0L Turbo

SPECIALLY TUNED SUSPENSION

The fortified chassis includes a specially tuned suspension, as well as a revised brake booster that enhances pedal feel. The 2.0-liter turbocharged Malibu turns and stops like a performance car too.

FRONT STRUTS WITH **REBOUND SPRINGS**

CHEVROLET

ATHENA PHEROMONE 10x™
GETS YOU MORE AFFECTION from WOMEN

Vial of 1/6 oz. added to 2-4 oz. of your fragrance, worn daily lasts 4 to 6 mos. 10X increases the affection you get from women.

Effective for 74% in two 8 week studies.

Athena Pheromone 10X for men: $99.50 for 6 month supply. Athena Pheromone 10:13 for women: $98.50. Cosmetics, not aphrodisiacs. FREE US SHIPPING.

UNSCENTED

RAISE the OCTANE of your AFTERSHAVE ™

DR.WINNIFRED B. CUTLER

- Creator of 10:13™ and 10X™
- PhD, biology, U Penn, Postdoc Stanford
- Author 8 books, 40+ scientific articles.
- Co-discovered human pheromones in 1986. (Time 12/1/86; Newsweek 1/12/87)

♥ **Jack (CA)** "I am ordering another vial of 10X because IT WORKS! I am in the film business and so I am around a lot of attractive women. **A lot of them are touchy-feely, but even those who weren't normally, became toucy-feely. Becky, for example, shocked me. She came up behind me and put her arms around me and said into my ear: 'What is it about you?!'** Since I started with the 10X, some women just get really more aggressive. Thanks."

Scan QR code wth Smart Phone

Not in stores. Call: 610-827-2200
or order online at
athenainstitute.com

REJECT CHEAP IMITATIONS

Athena Institute, 1211 Braefield Rd.
Chester Springs, PA 19425 AUT

K1SPEED presents
RACE TO THE FINISH
[AN INDOOR KARTING PRODUCTION]

FEATURING ARRIVE & DRIVE. ADULTS AND JUNIORS 48" AND UP. GREAT FAMILY FUN. PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNED TRACKS. SPACIOUS LOBBIES. AUTHENTIC RACING MEMORABILIA. MEETING ROOMS. CORPORATE EVENTS. CATERED PARTIES.

AZ - PHOENIX, CA - CARLSBAD · IRVINE · ANAHEIM · TORRANCE · ONTARIO · SANTA CLARA · SAN FRANCISCO · SACRAMENTO · SAN DIEGO CO - DENVER FL - FT. LAUDERDALE, MIAMI, GA - ATLANTA, HI - KAPOLEI, IL - BUFFALO GROVE · ADDISON, IN - INDIANAPOLIS, TX - AUSTIN · HOUSTON · SAN ANTONIO DALLAS, WA - SEATTLE (888) K1-KARTS | K1SPEED.com

GET YOUR FIX

What's Your Passion?
Check Out the One-Stop Hub for Everything Enthusiast

TEN THE ENTHUSIAST NETWORK

Visit: tenappstore.com

SPOIL HER this Christmas!
Shown: Ruby Velour Lounge Set

Send her a Pajama gram

Choose from hundreds of great styles, each delivered in our exclusive gift packaging along with FREE extras she'll love.

It's a gift you'll both love!

1.800.GIVE.PJS
PajamaGram.com

BMW & MINI parts

- Free shipping over $150 (most orders)
- Free DIY video guides
- Free color catalogs

BAVARIAN autosport
Parts, accessories & knowledge since 1974
800.535.2002 | BavAuto.com

SUBSCRIBE TO
Automobile
Call 1-800-289-2886 or go to www.Automobilemag.com.

myowncover

upload - design - order

Automobile
YOUR HEADLINE
YOUR PHOTO HERE
PORSCHE 918 SPYDER
WRINGING OUT THE $845K 795-HP HYBRID SUPERCAR
DESIGN MAN TECHNOLOGY RACING CAR of the Year
FIRST DRIVES:
ASTON MARTIN VANQUISH
VW GOLF • MAZDA 6
McLAREN MP4-12C SPIDER

Looking for a personalized gift for almost any occasion?

My Own Cover magazine covers are perfect for birthday gifts, holiday gifts, corporate recognitions, or celebrating a milestone. Each magazine cover is as unique as the person on the cover.

- Upload your own photos
- Design great personalized covers
- Order prints to share or give as gifts

Create your own magazine cover and be a star.

www.myowncover.com

ENLARGEMENT FOR A LIFETIME

LONGER, THICKER, FIRMER

Size Can Be Up To 3 Inches Bigger. Your Larger Size Can Be With You For A Lifetime. Reach Your Maximum Potential

CAN YOU HAVE PERMANENT OR ENLARGEMENT FOR A LIFETIME RESULTS?

Dr. Bross advises erection size can be up to 3 inches bigger and can have enlargement for a lifetime when you continue to take PRO+PLUS PILLS. Customers have long lasting results in 3 to 4 months. Size can be bigger in less than 40 days. The longer you take PRO+PLUS you can have maximum lasting results. Special 360 days prices.

- **Your sex partner can see and feel how thick, long and hard you are.**
- **You can penetrate deeper.**
- **Give her multiple orgasms.**

PRO+PLUS LQ ACCELERATOR LIQUID

Use with any Pro+Plus Pills and start to see results in just a few days. **ONLY $25.00 or FREE WITH ANY 360 DAYS SUPPLY OF PRO+PLUS PILLS**

PRO+PLUS XTREME

IMMEDIATE FIRM ERECTIONS BE READY ANYTIME

Can Work In 30 Minutes. Effective Up To 12 Hours.

FREE BOTTLE WITH ANY PRO+PLUS FORMULA

PRO+PLUS ***MYTMAX*** TESTOSTERONE BOOSTER

Increase Sex Drive, Libido, Desire, Performance and Energy. Longer-Lasting Erections.

SEXCITER LIQUID

Excites women.

ATTRACT-A-MATE

Human pheromone makes women desire you.

Perform Ultra Cream

Erection Cream

100% MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

www.proplusmedical.com
www.avidpromedical.com

CALL TOLL FREE ANYTIME
1-800-378-4689
1-818-342-2028 9 am-5 pm PST (M-F)

SEND ORDER FORM AND PAYMENT TO:
AVID PRO MEDICAL **dept. 51B1A**
Box 19010 Encino, CA 91416

Phone & Credit Card Orders specify products and dept. (shown above, next to company name).

☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ Cash

CREDIT CARD NO. ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Amex ☐ Discover

EXPIRES: Month/Year

CVS CODE 3-digit Security Code found on back of card or 4-digits on front of Amex

NAME (print) (I am over 18 and agree to the terms of avidpromedical.com)

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

EMAIL ADDRESS (optional)

PHONE NUMBER (optional)

Orders discreetly shipped with UPS or Priority Mail.

Foreign Orders – Add $25.00 S&H.

COPYRIGHT ©1996 PRO+PLUS is a trade name of Avid Pro Medical. Individual results may vary. These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

MADE IN THE U.S.A.

Choose Your PRO+PLUS Formula

Quantity	***MYTMAX*** Testosterone Booster	**Original** For men who are now 6 inches or more.	**Advanced** For the men with a size less than average.	**Ultimate** For men with any size penis. Does Not Contain Yohimbe And L-Arginine.	
60 Days Supply	☐ $45	☐ $50	☐ $60	☐ $80	$______
120 Days Supply	☐ $80	☐ $90	☐ $110	☐ $140	$______
240 Days Supply	☐ $110	☐ $130	☐ $160	☐ $200	$______
360 Days Supply	☐ $150	☐ $170	☐ $210	☐ $240	$______

TOTAL PRO+PLUS PILLS: $______

PRO+PLUS XTREME
FREE 8 Capsules With Any Other PRO+PLUS FORMULA
Please Specify Quantities

☐ FREE 1 Bottle (8 Capsules)	____	$14.95	$______
1 Bottle 48 Capsules	____	$48.75	$______

PRO+PLUS LQ ACCELERATOR LIQUID
FREE with 360 Days supply PRO+PLUS PILLS
1 Bottle ☐ FREE ____ $25.00 each $______

Super Formulas Only $25.00 Each Or Select ONE FREE With Any Pro+Plus Pills Order. Select Any THREE FREE With a 360 Days Supply of PRO+PLUS PILLS.
Please Specify Quantities

___ Sexciter Liquid to Excite Women	☐ FREE	$______
___ Attract-A-Mate to Attract Women	☐ FREE	$______
___ Perform Enhancement Cream	☐ FREE	$______

PRO+PLUS XTREME, LQ ACCELERATOR LIQUID and SUPER FORMULAS TOTAL: $______
TOTAL PURCHASE: $______
CA Residents add 9% sales tax: $______
Shipping, Rush Service and Insurance $20.00 VALUE ONLY $ 14.95
TOTAL ENCLOSED OR CHARGED: $______

V59

ESTABLISHED 1998
CELEBRATING 15 YEARS
VIAGRA®
Pfizer
Cialis®
Lilly icos
LEVITRA®
BAYER

Men's Lifestyle Medications

Genuine Brand Medication

- Lowest Prices from USA Pharmacies
- FDA-approved Viagra, Cialis, Levitra and more
- USPS and FedEx next day shipping available
- Over 550,000 Customers served since 1998

HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL

VIAMEDIC®

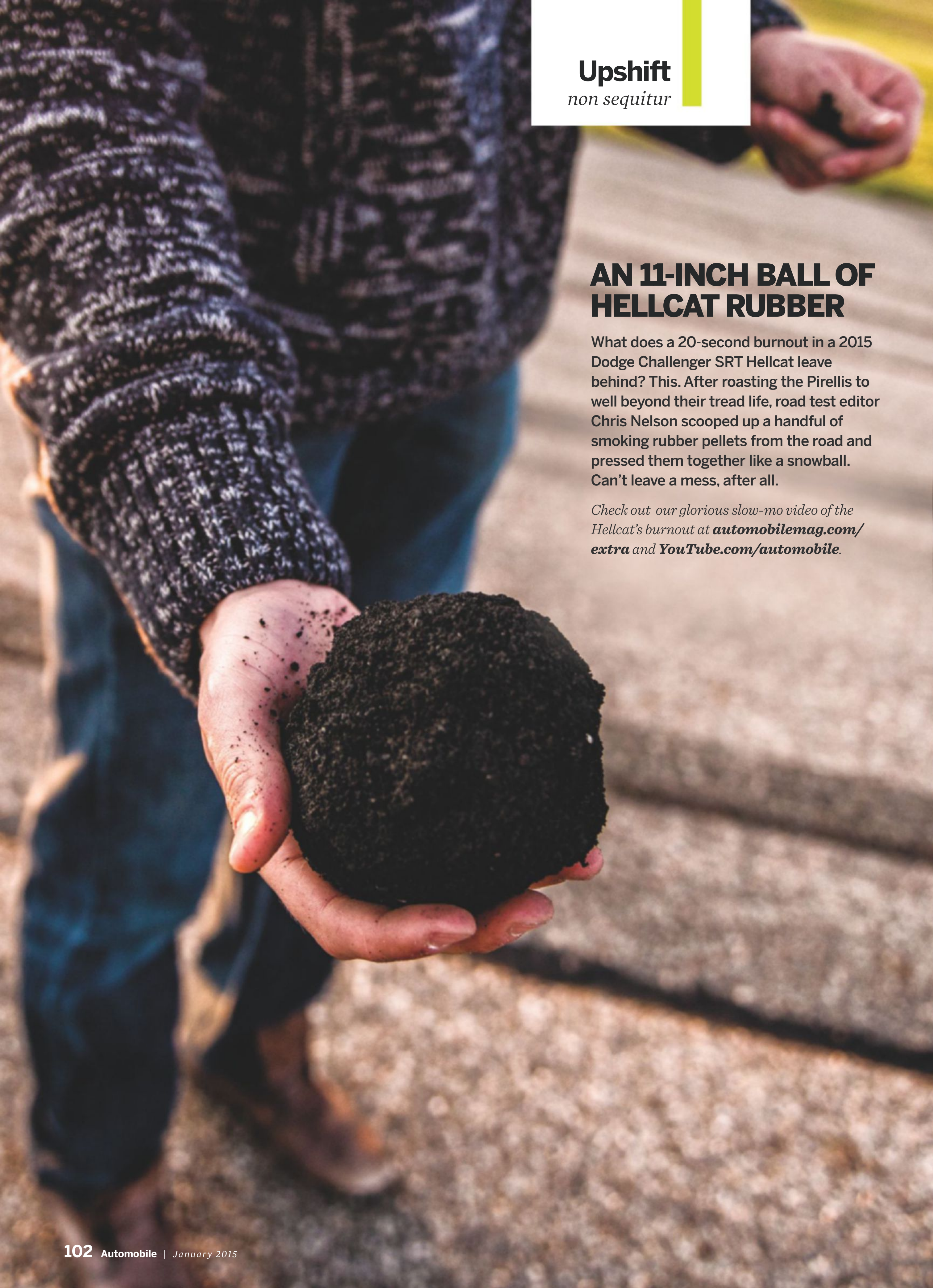
SAFE • SECURE • DISCREET

ACCREDITED BUSINESS BBB A+ Rating

CALL TOLL FREE 800-539-1917

Visit **Viamedic.com/AUTO** for special offers

To advertise in this section call 239-390-5389



AN 11-INCH BALL OF HELLCAT RUBBER

What does a 20-second burnout in a 2015 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat leave behind? This. After roasting the Pirellis to well beyond their tread life, road test editor Chris Nelson scooped up a handful of smoking rubber pellets from the road and pressed them together like a snowball. Can't leave a mess, after all.

Check out our glorious slow-mo video of the Hellcat's burnout at ***automobilemag.com/ extra*** *and* ***YouTube.com/automobile****.*

WELCOME TO OUR WORLD
BREITLING
BREITLING
BREITLING

At the heart of the most extreme missions are the exceptional pilots who experience daring feats on a daily basis and are prepared to entrust their security only to the most high-performing instruments. At the heart of the most extreme missions is the Breitling Avenger. A concentrated blend of power, precision and functionality, Avenger models boast an ultra-sturdy construction and water resistance ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 feet. These authentic instruments for professionals are equipped with selfwinding movements chronometer-certified by the COSC – the highest official benchmark in terms of reliability and precision. Welcome to the sphere of extremes. Welcome to the Breitling world.

SUPER AVENGER II

BREITLING
1884

BREITLING.COM

INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS™

MADE FROM
RACING
SKYACTIV
mazda
P
zoom-zoom

At Mazda, after 45 years of endurance racing, we believe there's more to it than faster lap times. With our win at Le Mans and our 23 class wins at Daytona, we've proven what's most important when it comes to racing: we race to learn. We learn what works and what doesn't in a fast paced and unforgiving environment, and that translates into a better car for you. This is why we race.

MazdaUSA.com